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SCENES AND CHARACTERISTICS

or

HINDOSTAN.

SCENES AND CHARACTERISTICS

OF

HINDOSTAN,

WITH

SKETCHES

OF

ANGLO-INDIAN SOCIETY.

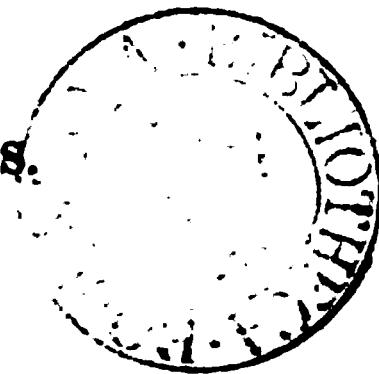
BY EMMA ROBERTS,

AUTHOR OF

"Memoirs of the Royal Houses of York and Lancaster," "Oriental Scenes," &c. &c.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.



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INTRODUCTION.

THE popularity obtained both in England and in India by a series of papers appearing in the **ASIATIC JOURNAL**, has led to their republication in a separate form.

Our territories in the Eastern world, though long and unaccountably neglected by persons of enquiring minds, are beginning to excite a very considerable degree of interest and attention, and the author may therefore hope that a work will be generally acceptable which affords information upon the subject of Native and Anglo-Indian Society.

The contents of the following volumes, consisting of the author's recollections of scenes and incidents occurring during her travels in India, are necessarily of a very desultory nature, but as it would have been impossible, in recasting and remodelling the whole, to preserve the freshness of the first impression, it was thought advisable to limit the revision to a few trifling additions and curtailments.

“ Many and excellent works have lately come under our notice illustrative of India, ancient and modern ; but we do not know when our attention has been more forcibly attracted than by a series of sketches published by Miss Roberts in that excellent miscellany the *Asiatic Journal*. Light, animated, and graphic, they describe manners and people with spirit, and scenery with a tone of poetical feeling which alone can do justice to the magnificence of the Eastern World. We hope she will be induced to collect them in a volume, and a delightful one it will be.”

Calcutta Literary Gazette.

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SCENES AND CHARACTERISTICS

OF

HINDOSTAN.



CHAP. I.

CALCUTTA.

THE approach to the City of Palaces from the river is exceedingly fine; the Hooghly at all periods of the year presents a broad surface of sparkling water, and as it winds through a richly wooded country, clothed with eternal verdure, and interspersed with stately buildings, the stranger feels that banishment may be endured amid scenes of so much picturesque beauty, attended by so many luxurious accompaniments. The usual landing-place, Champaul Ghaut, consists of a handsome stone esplanade, with a flight of broad steps leading to the water, which on the land side is entered through a sort of triumphal arch or gateway, supported upon pillars. Immediately in front of this edifice, a wide plain or *meidan* spreads over a spa-

cious area, intersected by very broad roads, and on two sides of this superb quadrangle a part of the city and the fashionable suburb of Chowringee extend themselves. The claims to architectural beauty of the City of Palaces have been questioned, and possibly there may be numberless faults to call forth the strictures of connoisseurs, but these are lost upon less erudite judges, who remain rapt in admiration at the magnificence of the *coup d'œil*. The houses for the most part are either entirely detached from each other, or connected only by long ranges of terraces, surmounted, like the flat roofs of the houses, with balustrades. The greater number of these mansions have pillared verandahs extending the whole way up, sometimes to the height of three stories, besides a large portico in front; and these clusters of columns, long colonnades, and lofty gateways, have a very imposing effect, especially when intermingled with forest trees and flowering shrubs. The material of the houses is what is termed *puckha*, brick coated with cement, resembling stone; and even those residences intended for families of very moderate income cover a large extent of ground, and afford architectural displays which would be vainly sought amid habitations belonging to the same class in England. These are

the characteristics of the fashionable part of Calcutta ; but even here, it must be acknowledged, that a certain want of keeping and consistency, common to every thing relating to India, injures the effect of the scene. A mud hut, or rows of native hovels, constructed of mats, thatch, and bamboos, not superior to the rudest wigwam, often rest against the outer walls of palaces, while there are avenues opening from the principal streets, intersected in all directions by native bazaars, filled with unsightly articles of every description. Few of the houses, excepting those exclusively occupied by Europeans, are kept in good repair ; the least neglect becomes immediately visible, and nothing can be more melancholy than the aspect of a building in India which has been suffered to fall into a dilapidated state. The cement drops from the walls in large patches, the bare brick-work is diversified by weather stains, in which lichens and the fungus tribe speedily appear ; the iron hinges of the outer venetians rust and break, and these gigantic lattices fall down, or hang suspended in the air, creaking and groaning with every breeze : the court yards are allowed to accumulate litter, and there is an air of squalor spread over the whole establishment which disgusts the eye.

Formerly, strangers visiting Calcutta were dependent upon the hospitality of the residents, or were compelled to take large unfurnished houses, there being neither lodgings nor hotels for the reception of guests. But the capital of Bengal has become too large to admit of the continuance of old customs; boarding, and other houses of public entertainment have been opened, and conducted in so respectable a manner, that notwithstanding the great difficulty of subduing ancient prejudices, no person, however fastidious, can now scruple to become an inmate of them. The inconvenience of entering an empty house after a long voyage, is not so strongly felt as might be imagined by persons unacquainted with the customs of India; little is wanted besides the furniture which has been used for the cabin on board ship, and that little can be immediately supplied from the bazaars. A new arrival at Calcutta is instantaneously surrounded by persons who offer their services, both as domestics and purveyors, and it is always advisable to ask some resident friend or acquaintance to recommend proper people, as otherwise, there is no city in the world in which there would be greater danger of falling into the hands of cheats and robbers. Notwithstanding the long and strict intercourse which has taken place between

the Bengallees and the English, a very small proportion of the natives have acquired the language of their masters: nor is the accomplishment, with very few exceptions, deemed at all desirable, since those who possess it are generally found to have lost all the virtues of the Indian character, without gaining any thing in exchange. The circars, who may be styled agents, of all descriptions, are for the most part tolerably well acquainted with the English language; but these men are notorious for their knavery: they live by encouraging the extravagance of their employers, and the ruin of more than half of the Company's servants may be traced to the facilities thrown in their way by the supple circar, who, in his pretended zeal for "master," has obtained for him money on credit to any amount. Circars however are a necessary evil, and the present scarcity of money renders them less dangerous than heretofore; nor does the character of rogue apply to all. It would be unjust and ungrateful to withhold the praise honestly earned by many of these men, who have shewn the utmost gratitude and fidelity to employers from whom their gains have been exceedingly trifling, consisting merely of a small per-centage upon the articles supplied, and which no European purchaser could have obtained

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at so low a rate. With the assistance of a circar, the household affairs are easily and speedily managed ; but in too many cases the first impression has been unfavourable, and persons who are unwilling to sit down to the acquirement of Hindostanee, choose to fancy all natives alike, and prefer having people about them of more than doubtful character, with whom they can converse, to the employment of a better class, who have no acquaintance with any language save their own. It is scarcely possible to impress the mind of a stranger in Calcutta too strongly with the necessity of collecting respectable persons in every department of the domestic establishment. The comfort of the household, and the security of property, which must necessarily be exposed to the forbearance of these people, are dependant upon the good conduct of the servants, and no one in India will be well served who does not comply with the customs of the country, or who has not sufficient command of temper to submit to many things which will at first appear irksome and disagreeable.

The furniture of a Calcutta house, though scanty, is handsome. The floors are covered with fine matting, and the walls are adorned with sconces having glass shades to them, some containing two, and others three lights. The loftiness of the apart-

ments renders a strong illumination necessary, and as cocoa-nut oil is very cheap, all the houses have the advantage of being exceedingly well lighted. One of the most beautiful features of the city at night, consists of the bright floods issuing from innumerable lamps in the houses of the rich, when, all the windows being open, the radiance is thrown across the neighbouring roads. The punkah is another distinguishing ornament of a Calcutta mansion; it is formed of a wooden frame-work, a foot and a-half, or two feet broad, hung in the centre of the room and extending nearly its whole length. This frame is covered with painted canvas or fluted silk, finished round the edges with gilt mouldings. It is suspended from the ceiling by ropes covered with scarlet cloth, very tastefully disposed, and hangs within seven feet of the ground. A rope is fastened to the centre, and the whole apparatus waves to and fro, creating, if pulled vigorously, a strong current of air, and rendering the surrounding atmosphere endurable, when the heat would be much too great to be borne without it. The chairs and tables are usually of very fine wood, handsomely carved, and the sofas are for the most part covered with satin damask; but comfort and convenience being more studied than ap-

pearance, there are few of those elegant little trifles in the way of furniture, by which an upholsterer in London contrives to make a fortune. It is thought that the *bijouterie* so much in esteem in Europe would foster insects, and also tend to impede the free circulation of air; and perhaps this notion is carried rather too far, for to unaccustomed eyes, at least, the interior of the handsomest houses of Calcutta have rather a desolate aspect.

Chinese goods, though so highly esteemed in England, are of little account in a place where they may be easily obtained; and there are fewer screens, vases, or lanthorns, of the manufacture of the Celestial Empire, than might be expected from the quantities annually shipped from Canton to the Calcutta market. One peculiarity strikes a stranger immediately as he enters a house in India inhabited by Europeans: all the sofas, chairs, tables, &c. are placed at the distance of a foot at least from the wall; a very necessary precaution in a country abounding with insects and reptiles of all kinds. Every side of every apartment is pierced with doors, and the whole of the surrounding anti-chambers appear to be peopled with ghosts. Servants clad in flowing white garments glide about with noiseless feet in all directions; and it is very

long before people accustomed to solitude and privacy in their own apartments, can become reconciled to the multitude of domestics who think themselves privileged to roam all over the house. A protracted residence in India will render the most active European perfectly dependant upon his servants; we are taught by experience the impossibility of living without them, and surrender ourselves at last wholly to their direction; but meanwhile we are struck and rather scandalized by the strange position which they occupy. Notwithstanding the division of castes, and the extreme contempt with which the higher orders of domestics look down upon their more humble brethren; their refusal to eat or smoke with them, or to touch any thing that has been defiled by their hands; to outward appearance there seems to be a confusion of ranks which would not be tolerated in other places. None of the inferior domestics keep themselves, as in England, in the back-ground: the water-carrier alone confines his perambulations to the back staircases; all the others, down to the scullions, make their appearance in the state apartments, whenever they deem it expedient to do so; and in Bengal, where the lower orders of palanquin-bearers wear very little clothing, it is not very agreeable to a

female stranger to see them walk into drawing-rooms, and employ themselves in dusting books or other occupations of the like nature. It would be highly disrespectful in any of the upper servants to appear in the presence of their masters without their turbans, or any other garment usually worn, but these things are deemed quite superfluous by the inferior classes, and they never seem to think that they can shock any body by the scantiness of their drapery, or the incongruity of their appearance.

Those who are fortunate enough to arrive in Calcutta in the cold season, find little reason to complain of the climate; the days are bright and cool, and the noon-day sun, though still powerful, may be braved in any carriage. An invitation to the house of some resident friend secures the party from every inconvenience; but these invitations are not now very frequently given, and even during periods of more extensive hospitality, parties were often left to provide for themselves, letters of introduction not always meeting with the promptest or warmest attention. Under such circumstances, nothing could be more forlorn than the situation of a stranger. If belonging to either service, the Writers' Buildings, or Fort William, offered an immediate asylum; but the shelter afforded by the

latter, unless to persons well accustomed to campaigning, must appear of the most dreary and comfortless description. A couple of bare unfurnished rooms strewn with boxes and packages, and a crowd of natives offering themselves for service in bad Bengallee and worse English, the coolies or porters vociferating to each other, and all striving to increase the hubbub and confusion, must be styled a melancholy reception in a strange land. The hotels and boarding houses lately established afford much better accommodation, and nothing except the necessity for economy would now induce parties from England to repair at once into an empty lodging. Travellers from the provinces, accustomed to the modes and manners of Indian life, and carrying every thing absolutely essential to their comfort about with them, are easily and almost instantaneously settled; young men, unencumbered with families, do not object to inhabit their tents during the cold weather; and it is no uncommon circumstance for parties to remain at a ghaut in a budgerow for a week at a time.

The suburb of Chowringee, which has lately extended over an immense tract of country, is the favourite residence of the European community.

The houses are all separate, standing in the midst of gardens, sometimes divided from each other by very narrow avenues, though more frequently intersected by broad roads. No particular plan appears to have been followed in their erection, and the whole, excepting the range facing the great plain, Park-street, Free-school-street, and one or two others, present a sort of confused labyrinth which, however, is very far from displeasing to the eye; the number of trees, grass-plats, and flowering shrubs, occasioning a most agreeable diversity of objects. From the roofs of these houses a strange, rich, and varied scene discloses itself: the river covered with innumerable vessels,—Fort William, and Government House, standing majestically at opposite angles of the plain,—the city of Calcutta, with its innumerable towers, spires, and pinnacles in the distance,—and nearer at hand, swamps and patches of unreclaimed jungle, showing how very lately the ground in the immediate neighbourhood of the capital of Bengal was an uncultivated waste, left to the wild beasts of the forest. A drive along the Circular Road brings the visitor into more immediate contact with the morasses and wildernesses which surround the habitations of Europeans in the outskirts of the city. This part of Calcutta is

chiefly the residence of shopkeepers, clerks, &c., Britons and Indo-Britons, but particularly the latter ; and, except as a mere matter of curiosity, it is seldom visited by the fashionable portion of the community. The European quarter of the city is extremely handsome, consisting of streets and squares, in which the greater portion of the houses are only united to each other by ranges of terraces built over the godowns (warehouses), stables, and servants' offices. The cathedral and the Scotch church are the two principal places of Protestant religious worship: the latter is the handsomer edifice of the two ; but, strange to say, notwithstanding the preponderance of the sons and daughters of Caledonia in the European population of Calcutta, it is very thinly attended, while the cathedral is always full to overflowing.

The Black Town, as it is called, extends along the river to the north, and a more wretched-looking place can scarcely be imagined ; dirty, crowded, ill-built, and abounding with beggars and bad smells. There is, however, a sort of debateable ground between the mud huts, the small dingy brick tenements, and the mean dilapidated bazaars of the middling and lower classes of natives, which is occupied by handsome houses enclosed in court-yards, belonging to

Armenian merchants, Parsees, and Bengallee gentlemen of great wealth and respectability. The avenues which lead to these mansions are exceedingly narrow, but the premises themselves are often very extensive, the principal apartments looking out upon pretty gardens, decorated with that profusion of flowers which renders every part of Calcutta so blooming. The drives and rides about the city are not very numerous, nor very extensive, excepting towards Barrackpore, for the whole of the surrounding country is still forest or lake ; a large piece of water extends on one side to the Sunderbunds, and the city is often very sensibly affected by the malaria brought from that woody desert. It is not possible to proceed a single mile in any direction without being struck by the excess of rank vegetation, which the toils of the husbandman have not sufficed to keep down, giving to the whole scene an air of savageness which its luxuriance is unable to redeem.

The population of Calcutta and its environs is extremely great, and at every hour of the day the streets and the roads are filled with crowds of natives, chiefly dressed in white muslin, a costume which produces a singular effect upon a large multitude. The European and Christian inhabitants

bear but a small proportion to the Mahommedans and Hindoos, not amounting at the utmost to more than twenty thousand persons, amid a population of three hundred thousand. One circumstance attending the Christian community is very remarkable, although perhaps hitherto unnoticed in any description of Calcutta :—they are never seen on any occasion to congregate together; there does not seem to be any one point of union, any object of general attraction, which can bring the whole into even momentary association. No church is sufficiently large to contain all the Protestant members, and the remaining sects are scattered through the Roman Catholic and Armenian places of worship. The public drive, though well frequented, by no means comprehends the larger portion of Anglo-Indian and Indo-Briton residents; the theatre is seldom full, and would not contain a tenth part; and neither at the races nor any other spectacle do they all assemble at one and the same time. Such an outpouring as London frequently exhibits is never to be seen, and it is questionable whether, if Government House were to take fire, it would bring them

“ All abroad to gaze
And wonder at the blaze.”

A good deal of animation and activity is exhi-

bited about sunset; horses, carriages, palanquins, or vehicles of some description, are to be seen at the doors of all the houses, and the roads are traversed by equipages of various degrees of splendour; but with the exception of those which wind their way to the Strand, the favourite scene of an airing, they disperse, and as no one thinks of walking abroad, people who have no conveyances confine themselves to the gardens, terraces, and house-tops.

The public drive in Calcutta affords a gay and interesting spectacle, but is sadly deficient in the elegance which might be expected from the wealth and taste of those who frequent it. There would be no difficulty in finding, upon any hackney-coach stand in London, carriages quite equal in appearance to many of those which figure amid this motley assembly, and there is not one that will bear any comparison with the elaborately finished equipages of Hyde Park, where the servants, horses, footmen, harness, and every trapping are in keeping with the magnificence of the vehicle. The expedient is always considered in India, and when not carried to an outrageous excess, people deserve credit for sacrificing the pomps and vanities to the comforts of life; but there are displays upon the course of Calcutta which, to say the least of them,

are very indecorous. Gentlemen are rather too apt to adopt a favourite method of repose : when seated in their carriages, it is no uncommon sight to see the feet resting upon the door of the vehicle, an attitude much adopted by old and rich *Qui His*, and imitated by those who are desirous to shew their independence of every etiquette of civilized society. The dresses of the ladies have very little pretensions to splendour compared to the displays of the toilette in the capital of Europe. Many during the warm weather dispense with bonnets and wear their hair in the plainest manner : circumstances which, though rendered almost necessary by the climate, detract from the general effect. There is not so great a variety of Oriental costumes as might be expected : some of the Armenians appear in their national dress ; a few Hindoo and Mahomedan gentlemen are to be seen clad in very picturesque attire ; and a Chinese physician, in an old tumble-down chariot, personifies all the gravity and dignity of his nation.

CHAPTER II.

BENGAL BRIDALS AND BRIDAL CANDIDATES.

FEW opinions can be more erroneous than those which prevail in Europe upon the subject of Indian marriages. According to the popular idea, a young lady visiting the Honourable Company's territories, is destined to be sacrificed to some old, dingy, rich, bilious nawaub, or, as he is styled on this side of the Atlantic, "nabob," a class of persons unfortunately exceedingly rare. Ancient subjects devoted to the interests of the conclave in Leadenhall-street, belonging to both services, are doubtless to be found in India, some dingy, and some bilious, but very few rich; and, generally speaking, these elderly gentlemen have either taken to themselves wives in their younger days, or have become such confirmed bachelors, that neither flashing eyes, smiling lips, lilies, roses, dimples, &c. comprehending the whole catalogue of female fascinations, can make the slightest impression upon their flinty hearts. Happy may the fair expectant account herself, who has

the opportunity of choosing or refusing a *rara avis* of this nature,—some yellow civilian out of debt, or some battered brigadier, who saw service in the days of sacks and sieges, and who comes wooing in the olden style, preceded by trains of servants bearing presents of shawls and diamonds! Such prizes are scarce. The damsel, educated in the fallacious hope of seeing a rich antiquated suitor at her feet, laden with “barbaric pearl and gold,” soon discovers to her horror that, if she should decide upon marrying at all, she will be absolutely compelled to make a love-match, and select the husband of her choice out of the half-dozen subalterns who may offer; fortunate may she esteem herself if there be one amongst them who can boast a staff-appointment, the adjutancy or quarter-mastership of his corps. Formerly, when the importations of European females were much smaller than at present, men grew grey in the service before they had an opportunity of meeting with a wife, there consequently was a supply of rich old gentlemen ready at every station to lay their wealth at the feet of the new arrival; and as we are told that “mammon wins its way where seraphs might despair,” it may be supposed that younger and poorer suitors had no chance against these wealthy wooers. The

golden age has passed away in India; the silver-fruitage of the rupee-tree has been plucked, and love, poverty-stricken, has nothing left to offer but his roses.

In the dearth of actual possessions, expectancies become of consequence; and now that old civilians are less attainable, young writers rank amongst the eligibles. A supply of these desirables, by no means adequate to the demand, is brought out to Calcutta every year, and upon the arrival of a young man who has been lucky enough to secure a civil appointment, he is immediately accommodated with a handsome suite of apartments in Tank-square, styled, *par distinction*, "the Buildings," and entered at the college, where he is condemned to the study of the Hindoostanee and Persian languages, until he can pass an examination which shall qualify him to become an assistant to a judge, collector, or other official belonging to the civil department. A few hours of the day are spent under the surveillance of a moonshee, or some more learned pundit, and the remainder are devoted to amusements. This is the dangerous period for young men bent upon making fortunes in India, and upon returning home. They are usually younger sons, disregarded in England on

account of the slenderness of their finances, or too juvenile to have attracted matrimonial speculations. Launched into the society of Calcutta, they enact the parts of the young dukes and heirs-apparent of a London circle; where there are daughters or sisters to dispose of. The "*great parti*" is caressed, fêted, dressed at, danced at, and flirted with, until perfectly bewildered; either falling desperately in love, or fancying himself so, he makes an offer, which is eagerly accepted by some young lady, too happy to escape the much-dreaded horrors of a half-batta station. The writers, of course, speedily acquire a due sense of their importance, and conduct themselves accordingly. Vainly do the gay uniforms strive to compete with their more sombre rivals; no dashing cavalry officer, feathered, and sashed, and epauletted, has a chance against the men privileged to wear a plain coat and a round hat; and in the evening drives in Calcutta, sparkling eyes will be turned away from the military equestrian, gracefully reining up his Arab steed to the carriage-window, to rest upon some awkward rider, who sits his horse like a sack, and, more attentive to his own comfort than to the elegance of his appearance, may, if it should be the rainy season, have thrust his white jean trowsers into jockey boots,

and introduced a black velvet waistcoat under his white calico jacket. Figures even more extraordinary are not rare; for, though the ladies follow European fashions as closely as circumstances will admit, few gentlemen, not compelled by general orders to attend strictly to the regulations of the service, are willing to sacrifice to the Graces. An Anglo-Indian dandy is generally a very grotesque personage; for where tailors have little sway, and individual taste is left to its own devices, the attire will be found to present strange incongruities.

When a matrimonial proposal has been accepted, the engagement of the parties is made known to the community at large by their appearance together in public. The gentleman drives the lady out in his buggy. This is conclusive; and should either prove fickle, and refuse to fulfil the contract, a breach of promise might be established in the Supreme Court, based upon the single fact, that the pair were actually seen in the same carriage, without a third person. The nuptials of a newly-arrived civilian, entrapped at his outset, are usually appointed to take place at some indefinite period, namely, when the bridegroom shall have got out of college. It is difficult to say whether the strength of his affection should be measured by

• a speedy exit, or a protracted residence, for love may be supposed to interfere with study, and though excited to diligence by his matrimonial prospects, a mind distracted between rose-coloured billet-doux, and long rolls of vellum covered with puzzling characters in Arabic and Persian, will not easily master the difficulties of Oriental lore.

The allowances of a writer in the Buildings are not exceedingly splendid; writers do not, according to the notion adopted in England, step immediately into a salary of three or four thousand a year, though, very probably with the brilliant prospect before them which dazzled their eyes upon their embarkation, not yet sobered down to dull reality, they commence living at that rate. The bridegroom elect, consequently, is compelled to borrow one or two thousand rupees to equip himself with household goods necessary for the married state, and thus lays the foundation for an increasing debt, bearing an interest of twelve per cent. at the least. The bride, who would not find it quite so easy to borrow money, and whose relatives do not consider it necessary to be very magnificent upon these occasions, either contrives to make her outfit (the grand expense incurred in her behalf) serve the purpose, or should that have faded and grown old-fashioned,

purchases some scanty addition to her wardrobe. Thus the bridal paraphernalia, the bales of gold and silver muslins, the feathers, jewels, carved ivory, splendid brocades, exquisite embroidery, and all the rich products of the East, on which our imaginations luxuriate when we read of an Indian marriage, sinks down into a few yards of white sarsnet. There is always an immense concourse of wedding-guests present at the ceremony, but as invitations to accompany a bridal-party to the church are of very frequent occurrence, they do not make any extraordinary display of new dresses and decorations. Sometimes, the company separate at the church-door; at others, there is some sort of entertainment given by the relatives of the bride; but the whole business, compared with the pomp and circumstance attending weddings of persons of a certain rank in England, is flat, dull, and destitute of show.

The mode of living in India is exceedingly adverse to bridal tours. Unless the parties should procure the loan of some friend's country mansion, a few miles from Calcutta, they must proceed straight to their own residence; for there are no hotels, no watering places, and no post-horses:—circumstances which detract materially from the

éclat of a marriage. The poor bride, instead of enjoying a pleasant excursion, is obliged to remain shut up at home, and her first appearance in public creates very little sensation, probably from the absence of expectation on the score of new garments.

In up-country stations, marriages are even more common-place affairs, and the clerk of a country church would be absolutely scandalised at the neglect of the customary observances. Some writer upon India has remarked that the ladies are overdressed. That must have been the case in the by-gone days of splendour, when they could afford to give *carte blanche* to milliners in London or at the presidencies: much to their credit be it spoken, in the wildest jungles, they endeavour to make an appearance suitable to their rank and circumstances; but this is very frequently a matter of great difficulty. Patterns are sometimes useless from the want of materials to make them up, and materials nearly so from the impossibility of procuring patterns.

Articles of British manufacture are exceedingly expensive, and often beyond the reach of narrow purses. The demand is not sufficiently great to induce a trader to keep a large assortment of goods, and he cannot afford to supply the few articles required by the small female community at

low prices. The Indian market is frequently overstocked, and valuable articles knocked down at sales for little or nothing: but they seldom come very cheaply into the hands of the consumer, the climate, unlike that of Kippletringan, eulogized by Dominie Sampson, is exceedingly injurious to wearing apparel, and much waste and destruction is effected by the want of care of native dealers, who do not understand the method of preserving European manufactures from dust and decay.

The contrast between the splendid dresses of a London ball-room, fresh in their first gloss, with the tarnished, faded, lustreless habiliments exhibited in Calcutta, is very striking to a stranger's eye; while, after a long residence in the upper provinces, the fair assemblages at the presidency appear to be decked in the utmost glory of sumptuous array. But although Indian weddings may be destitute of magnificence, they are generally productive of lasting happiness; they entail, comparatively speaking, little additional expense, and the small preparations which alone are considered essential, offer great facilities for early unions. A young man, depending as he must do, for all his enjoyments, upon domestic comfort, naturally feels anxious to secure a companion to enliven his other-

wise dull home ; his resources out of doors are few ; there may not be many houses in which he can lounge away his mornings in idle visits ; the billiard-room does not suit all tastes, and however addicted he may be to field sports, during several hours of the day he must seek the shelter of a roof ; his military duties occupy a very small portion of his time, and with little to interest, and nothing to divert him, he becomes anxiously desirous to taste the calm delights of wedded life. If he should be so fortunate as to be a successful wooer, the marriage speedily takes place.

There are few regimental messes established in native regiments ; the officers inhabit separate bungalows, and if two happen to chum together, the intended Benedict turns his friend out to make way for his bride. If he should be rich enough, he may be seen at sales (for there is always some person quitting a station and selling off), purchasing looking-glasses, toilette-tables, and such unwonted luxuries in a bachelor's mansion. But they are not absolutely necessary, nor are they considered essential to connubial felicity ; very frequently the whole of the preparations consist in the exit of the chum and his *petarrahs* (boxes which may be carried *banghie*, that is, suspended

at either end of a bamboo slung across a bearer's shoulder), and the entrance of the bride and her wardrobe, crammed to the special injury of the flounces and furbelows, into half a dozen square conical tin cases painted green.

The *trousseau* of the bride varies according to the means and appliances of the station, and of her own or relatives' purses. There are a set of men in India, very closely resembling the pedlars and duffers of Scotland and England, denominated *box-wallahs*, who enact the character of *marchand des modes*, both in Calcutta and in the upper provinces. The box-wallah himself is a well-dressed respectable personage, frequently very rich; his goods are conveyed in large tin chests upon the heads of coolies, and instead of making a tour of shopping, the lady, desirous to add to her wardrobe, sends for all the box-wallahs and examines the contents of their chests. The party thus formed presents a singular scene; nearly the whole are seated, the lady upon a chair, the merchants and their ragged attendants upon the floor; each vender pulls out his own goods, and offers them for sale, with numerous but not noisy commendations.

The spirit of rivalry assumes a very amiable aspect: all the principals speak a little English;

having to deal with new arrivals, young ladies who have made a very small progress in Hindoostanee, they find it to their advantage to acquire the means of bargaining with their fair customers. The prices of goods are regulated not so much by their intrinsic value, as by the stock in hand, and the demand. Ribbons, which are always called for, are never cheap; but rich silks and satins, blondes, gauzes, and the like, are often sold at very low prices.

Some attention to method is observed in the arrangements of the boxes: one contains a multifarious assortment of mercery and haberdashery, where we are often startled by the apparition of some obsolete manufacture, which, after having slumbered in an English warehouse during a quarter of a century, is sent out on a venture to India, under the idea that it may pass current in the upper provinces as a fashionable article. The poor deluded box-wallah is astonished and confounded at the contempt and horror which his Chamberry's, his Plowman's nets, and Picket muslins excite. In vain he endeavours to recommend them to notice; his English goes no farther than "I beg pardon, ma'am; very good thing—very handsome—no dear price—very rich lady—very poor man—you give what I ask." Frequently, during the course of the

bargaining, the servants interfere in behalf of their mistresses, and procure more advantageous terms.

Stationery, pen-knives, soap, lavender-water, tooth-brushes, hair-brushes, small looking-glasses, and minor articles of hardware, are deposited in another chest; these are taken out and displayed, until the whole floor is strewn with trumpery of various kinds, the sweepings of London shops, condemned to return to their boxes until, in some miserable time of scarcity, they are purchased for want of better things.

The bride makes her selection where there is probably little choice, and the dresses are handed over to the household tailor (the *dirzee* as he is called), who occupies a conspicuous place in the ante-room or verandah, seated upon a piece of white cloth, with his work spread out around him. Should there be occasion for despatch, assistants are hired by the day; and with these poor substitutes for milliners and dress-makers, the bride must perforce be content: probably a bonnet comes up with the license from Calcutta, but as the latter is conveyed by dawk (post), and the former must travel dawk-banghie, a less rapid mode of transportation, it is not unfrequently dispensed with. Female ingenuity is severely taxed upon these occa-

sions, and many and weariful are the fittings on and the cuttings out, before the hat and pelisse can be made to resemble the pattern-figures in *La Belle Assemblée*.

The whole of the residents of the station, or, if it should be a large one, the greater part, are invited to witness the ceremony, and those ladies who consider white to be indispensable for a wedding, who think it proper to appear in full dress, and who are unable to obtain new vestments, exhibit to great disadvantage. A muslin gown is probably ironed out, and the betraying daylight not only reveals the spots and specks, which have been carefully ironed in, but also the discrepancies of the trimming, in which French white and pearl white, tolerably good matches by candle-light, disagree exceedingly in open day. No kind of etiquette is observed in the order of the celebration; the bridegroom, contrary to all established rule, is often seen to drive the bride in his buggy to church; the company, instead of being properly arranged, stand promiscuously round the altar; and the clerk, usually a soldier, is a person of no sort of authority.

The parties are frequently very juvenile—a young ensign and a still younger partner; but such

unions are not considered imprudent, for they are often the means of preventing extravagance, dissipation, and all their concomitant evils. Instances of domestic infelicity are comparatively rare in India: the value of a wife is known and appreciated, and, though there may be many bachelors from choice, the majority of Anglo-Indians are exceedingly anxious to obtain for themselves a security against the tedium and *ennui* of a solitary jungle,—a being interested in their welfare, and not only attached to them by the tenderest and most sacred of all ties, but who supplies the place of relatives whom they may never hope to see again.

The greatest drawback upon the chances of happiness in an Indian marriage, exists in the sort of compulsion sometimes used to effect the consent of a lady. Many young women in India may be considered almost homeless; their parents or friends have no means of providing for them except by a matrimonial establishment; they feel that they are burthens upon families who can ill afford to support them, and they do not consider themselves at liberty to refuse an offer, although the person proposing may not be particularly agreeable to them. Mrs. Malaprop tells us, that it is safest to begin with a little aversion, and the truth of her

aphorism has been frequently exemplified in India; gratitude and esteem are admirable substitutes for love—they last much longer, and the affection, based upon such solid supports, is purer in its nature, and far more durable, than that which owes its existence to mere fancy. It is rarely that a wife leaves the protection of her husband, and in the instances that have occurred, it is generally observed that the lady has made a love-match.

But though marriages of convenience, in nine cases out of ten, turn out very happily, we are by no means prepared to dispute the propriety of freedom of choice on the part of the bride, and deem those daughters, sisters, and nieces most fortunate, who live in the bosoms of relatives not anxious to dispose of them to the first suitor who may apply. It is only under these happy circumstances that India can be considered a paradise to a single woman, where she can be truly free and unfettered, and where her existence may glide away in the enjoyment of a beloved home, until she shall be tempted to quit it by some object dearer far, than parents, friends, and all the world beside.

There cannot be a more wretched situation than that of a young woman who has been induced to follow the fortunes of a married sister, under the

delusive expectation that she will exchange the privations attached to limited means in England for the far-famed luxuries of the East. The husband is usually desirous to lessen the regret of his wife at quitting her home, by persuading an affectionate relative to accompany her, and does not calculate before-hand the expense and inconvenience which he has entailed upon himself by the additional burthen.

Soon after their arrival in India, the family, in all probability, have to travel to an up-country station,—and here the poor girl's troubles begin : she is thrust into an outer cabin in a budgerow, or into an inner room in a tent ; she makes perhaps a third in a buggy, and finds herself always in the way ; she discovers that she is a source of continual expense ; that an additional person in a family imposes the necessity of keeping several additional servants, and where there is not a close carriage she must remain a prisoner. She cannot walk out beyond the garden or the verandah, and all the out-of-door recreations, in which she may have been accustomed to indulge in at home, are denied her.

Tending flowers, that truly feminine employment, is an utter impossibility ; the garden may be full of plants (which she has only seen in their exotic state) in all the abundance and beauty of native

luxuriance, but except before the sun has risen, or after it has set, they are not to be approached; and even then, the frame is too completely enervated by the climate to admit of those little pleasing labours, which render the green-house and the parterre so interesting. She may be condemned to a long melancholy sojourn at some out-station, offering little society, and none to her taste.

If she should be musical, so much the worse; the hot winds have split her piano and her gultar, or the former is in a wretched condition, and there is nobody to tune it; the white ants have demolished her music-books, and new ones are not to be had. Drawing offers a better resource, but it is often suspended from want of materials; and needle-work is not suited to the climate. Her brother and sister are domestic, and do not sympathize in her *ennui*; they either see little company, or invite guests merely with a view to be quit of an incumbrance.

If the few young men who may be at the station should not entertain matrimonial views, they will be shy of their attention to a single woman, lest expectations should be formed which they are not inclined to fulfil. It is dangerous to hand a disengaged lady too often to table, for though no conversation may take place between the parties, the

gentleman's silence is attributed to want of courage to speak, and the offer, if not forthcoming, is inferred. A determined flirt may certainly succeed in drawing a train of admirers around her; but such exhibitions are not common, and where ladies are exceedingly scarce, they are sometimes subject to very extraordinary instances of neglect. These are sufficiently frequent to be designated by a peculiar phrase; the wife or sister who may be obliged to accept a relative's arm, or walk alone, is said to be "wrecked," and perhaps an undue degree of apprehension is entertained upon the subject; a mark of rudeness of this nature reflecting more discredit upon the persons who can be guilty of it, than upon those subjected to the affront. Few young women, who have accompanied their married sisters to India, possess the means of returning home; however strong their dislike may be to the country, their lot is cast in it, and they must remain in a state of miserable dependence, with the danger of being left unprovided for before them, until they shall be rescued from this distressing situation by an offer of marriage.

The tie between husband and wife is the only one from which Anglo-Indians can hope to derive solid happiness; that between parents and children

is subject to many shocks. The difficulty, amounting almost to impossibility, of educating young people in India, occasions early separation, which, in too many instances, proves fatal to the enjoyments of a re-union. After a long absence, parents and children meet as strangers: the latter, probably consigned to some large school, have not been brought up with any very exalted ideas upon the subject of filial duty. They are keen and quick observers of the faults and follies of those whom they have not been early accustomed to regard with respect; and the former are apt to exact too much submission. Both parties are disappointed, the younger having hoped to meet with unlimited indulgence, while the elder flatter themselves with erroneous expectations of obedience.

Aaccomplished girls, fresh from England, are unprepared for the modes and habits of Indian life; the charm of novelty does not always reconcile them to things strange, and often uncouth; while mothers, to whom all around is familiar, are astonished and displeased to find that the young ladies do not readily fall into their ways, and are more prone to dictate than to obey. Where these differences of opinion do not create strife and contention, they are productive of coldness; each person feels deeply

aggrieved by the conduct of others towards them ; those who possess amiable dispositions, make allowances for circumstances and situation, but seldom do we see the attached and happy families which afford such beautiful pictures of domestic felicity in England.

That death and absence differ but in name, all who have been long separated from those whom they love best in the world must readily allow. Experience in India shews that even a mother's affection, perchance the strongest and most lasting sentiment, is not proof against it, or how can we account for the exceeding, and, it may be added, disgusting anxiety, continually manifested to get rid of daughters as rapidly as they are brought out ?

It is no unusual thing for persons who have accumulated a fortune, and who are desirous to spend the remainder of their days in luxury in England, to marry off the females of their family as fast as they possibly can, little caring to whom they are consigned, and leaving them to combat with every sort of hardship, without a hope of their ever meeting again. The condition of girls thus situated is far from enviable ; overtures are made to their parents, and accepted by them without consulting the parties who are the most deeply

concerned in the transaction; the young lady is simply told that a proposal has been made in which she must acquiesce, and she goes to the altar, if not unwilling, at least indifferent. Many are so strongly impressed with the comfortless nature of their situation, that they gladly avail themselves of the first opportunity to effect a change, and nothing more disagreeable can readily be imagined than the condition of the last of four or five sisters, who by some inexplicable fatality remains single. She is frequently bandied about from one family to another, seeking rest and finding none. Whether she may have matrimonial views, or if perfectly guiltless of all design, it is the same thing, she is supposed to be manœuvring for a husband, and those whom she may fascinate do not always possess the moral courage requisite to acknowledge a partiality for a girl, who has failed to secure early offers, or the reputation of having refused them. At length, when her pretensions have almost become a jest, some candidate for her hand appears, and is of course successful; it is then discovered that she is a very fine young woman, and all agree that her protracted state of spinsterhood must have been a matter of choice.

It is an amusing thing for a spectator to observe

the straight-forward, business-like manner in which marriages in India are brought about. The opinion entertained by the princess Huncamunca, respecting the expediency of short courtships, seems to prevail. A gentleman, desirous to enter the holy pale, does not always wait until he shall meet with some fair one suiting his peculiar taste, but the instant that he hears of an expected arrival, despatches a proposal to meet her upon the road; this is either rejected *in toto*, or accepted conditionally; and if there should be nothing very objectionable in the suitor, the marriage takes place. Others travel over to some distant station, in the hope of returning with a wife; and many visit the presidency on the same errand. Numbers return without achieving their object, and these unfortunates are said to be members of the "*juwau* club," a favourite Indian phrase, which is exceedingly expressive of the forlorn state of bachelors upon compulsion.

Young men who are qualifying themselves for interpreterships, or who expect staff-appointments, are often supposed to be quite guiltless of matrimonial designs; they may be attached to a large station without even entering into any of the gaities,—are not seen at balls, plays, or races, and

do not frequent the morning levées of ladies of distinction. Suddenly, upon obtaining the promised post, they appear at a ball, and some girl, who has been a leading *belle*, and who has flirted with half the station, is quietly approached. She, with more sense than sentiment, disengages herself from her butterfly-admirers, on whom the astounding fact of her approaching marriage acts like an electric shock; they look very foolishly at each other, and make a faint attempt to laugh.

The spinsterhood of India is composed of three different classes; the first consists of the daughters of civil and military servants, merchants, and others settled in India, who have been sent to England for education, and who generally return between the ages of sixteen and twenty; these may be said to belong to the country, and to possess homes, although upon the expectation of the arrival of a second or third daughter, they are often disposed of after a very summary fashion. In the second are to be found the sisters and near relatives of those brides who have married Indian officers, &c. during the period of a visit to the mother-country, and who, either through affection for their relatives, or in consequence of having no provision in England, have been induced to accompany them to

the Eastern world. The third is formed of the orphan daughters, legitimate and illegitimate, of Indian residents, who have been educated at the presidencies. This latter class is exceedingly numerous, and as they are frequently destitute of family connexions, those who are not so fortunate as to possess relatives in a certain rank in life, see very little of society, and have comparatively little chance of being well-established. The progress of refinement has materially altered the condition of these young ladies, but has acted in a manner the very reverse of improvement, as far as their individual interests are concerned.

A considerable number, having no support excepting that which is derived from the Orphan Fund, reside at a large house at Kidderpore, about a mile and a-half from Calcutta, belonging to that institution; others who may be endowed with the interest of a few thousand rupees, become parlour-boarders at schools of various degrees of respectability, where they await the chance of attracting some young officer, the military being objects of consideration when civilians are unattainable.

Formerly it was the practice to give balls at the establishment at Kidderpore, to which vast numbers of beaux were invited; but this un-

disguised method of seeking husbands is now at variance with the received notions of propriety, and the Female Orphan School has assumed, in consequence of the discontinuance of these parties, somewhat of the character of a nunnery. In fact, the young ladies immured within the walls have no chance of meeting with suitors, unless they should possess friends in Calcutta to give them occasional invitations, or the fame of their beauty should spread itself abroad. Every year, by increasing the number of arrivals educated in England, lessens their chance of meeting with eligible matches.

The prejudices against "dark beauties" (the phrase usually employed to designate those who are the inheritors of the native complexion) are daily gaining ground, and in the present state of female intellectuality, their uncultivated minds form a decided objection. The English language has degenerated in the possession of the "country-born;" their pronunciation is short and disagreeable, and they usually place the accent on the wrong syllable: though not so completely barbarized as in America, the mother, or rather father-tongue, has lost all its strength and beauty, and acquired a peculiar idiom.

There are not many heiresses to be found in India, and those who are gifted with property of any kind,

almost invariably belong to the dark population, the daughters or grand-daughters of the Company's servants of more prosperous times, the representatives of merchants of Portuguese extraction, or the ladies of Armenian families. These latter named are frequently extremely handsome, and nearly as fair as Europeans; but though adopting English fashions in dress, they do not speak the language, and sing in Hindoostanee to their performances on the piano. They mix very little in the British society of Calcutta, and usually intermarry with persons belonging to their own nation, living in a retired manner within the bosoms of their families, without being entirely secluded like the females of the country in which their ancestors have been so long domiciled.

The daughters and wives of the Portuguese, a numerous and wealthy class, are quite as tawny, and not so handsome, as the natives; they usually dress in a rich and tawdry manner, after the European fashion, which is particularly unbecoming to them: they form a peculiar circle of their own, and though the spinster portion of this community, it is said, prefer British officers to husbands of Portuguese extraction, unions between them are extremely rare.

CHAPTER III.

SCENES IN THE MOFUSSIL : CAWNPORE.

ALTHOUGH our Indian territories are much better and more extensively known than they were even a few years ago, it may still be necessary to translate and explain some of the appellations commonly adopted by the European residents of Bengal, to designate places and things, many of which can scarcely fail to perplex uninitiated ears. The Mofussil is a term applied to the provinces, all the military cantonments, and the residences appointed for civilians beyond the presidency, being called Mofussil stations. Individuals quartered in the provinces, are styled Mofussillites, and if remaining during a long series of years at a distance from the capital, they usually acquire modes and habits which certainly entitle them to some distinguishing appellation. There is, however, nothing invidious or disrespectful in the term, it being applied indiscriminately to all dwellers in the provinces, while those who may have barbarized a little during their seclusion amid wilds and fastnesses, are styled *par*

distinction "jungle-wallahs." It is difficult to explain the precise meaning of the word *wallah*: it is usually translated "fellow;" but to the natives of India, who call Indigo-planters, "*leal* (blue) *wallahs*," camel drivers, "*oonte-wallahs*," &c. it does not convey the idea which we attach to this expression in England.

Cawnpore is one of the principal stations of the Mofussil, and is situated upon the right bank of the Ganges, about 600 miles from Calcutta. It is seldom that this cantonment has received common justice from its describers, the duty being rather annoying; military men, who, except upon service, usually object to the toils and tasks of their profession, dislike it because they are, what they are pleased to style, harassed by inspections, field-days, drills, committees, &c. &c. Those who do not choose to avow the real cause of their disgust, complain that it is dusty and hot; but these are disadvantages which it must share with all the stations within some hundred miles, while they are more than counterbalanced by the numerous enjoyments afforded by its superior size and the number of its inhabitants.

With the exception of the Ganges, which rolls its broad waves beside the British lines, nature

has done little for Cawnpore; but the sandy plain, broken occasionally into ravines, which forms its site, has been so much embellished by the hand of man, that an unprejudiced person, not subjected to the miseries of field-days, will not hesitate to say that it possesses much picturesque beauty.

The garrison consists of a European regiment of dragoons, and one of native cavalry; several battalions of artillery, horse, and foot; one King's, and three Company's regiments of infantry; a major-general in command; and the numerous staff attached to the head-quarters of a large district. There are few civilians, two judges and two collectors, with their assistants, comprising the whole of the Company's civil servants (the aristocracy of India), who are stationed at Cawnpore. These personages, having far better allowances, and being settled in one place for a longer period, have handsomer houses, more numerous trains of servants, and live in better style than the military residents; but the difference at Cawnpore is not so remarkable as at many other stations, on account of the high rank, and consequently the large incomes, of many of the officers belonging to the garrison.

Two or three indigo-planters in the neighbourhood complete the *grande monde* of Cawnpore; but there

are other British residents, who form a second circle ; the owners of shops and farms, coach-makers, bakers, and tailors, to whom it must be a much more desirable place of abode than a smaller station, since it affords them the advantage of society. A solitary individual, belonging to a class which is not considered visitable in India, must feel peculiarly isolated. Though he might be inclined to stoop to a lower grade, excepting where there is a European regiment, he cannot find associates from his own country ; and even an intimate acquaintance with the language could scarcely enable an Englishman to feel any gratification in a companionship with Hindoos or Moosulmans, even of a rank superior to his own.

One objection made to Cawnpore is its want of concentration ; the lines of the various regiments straggle to the distance of five miles along the river's bank, and it is deemed a hardship to travel so far to visit a friend : but the scene is thereby agreeably diversified, and the compounds (a corruption of the Portuguese word *campania*), which surround the bungalows, are larger than could be the case if its limits were more circumscribed. Many of these compounds are beautifully planted, and have a very park-like appearance, particularly

during the rainy season, when the cultivated parts of the plain have put on their green mantle. The prickly pear is greatly in request for fences; and the tall pagoda-like aloe, with a base resembling the crown of a gigantic pine-apple, frequently intervening, forms a magnificent embellishment to the plantations.

The houses at Cawnpore are, with very few exceptions, *cutchas*, that is, built of unbaked mud, and either choppered (thatched) or tiled; but they are, generally speaking, extremely large and commodious. The plans of bungalows are various, but the most common consist of three centre rooms; those opening on the front and back verandah being smaller than the one occupying the interior, which is called the hall; these rooms communicate with three others, much narrower on each side, and at the four corners are bathing rooms, taken off the verandah, which stretches all round. The centre, and largest room, has only the borrowed lights permitted by eight, ten, or twelve doors leading out of the surrounding apartments: these doors are always open, but some degree of privacy is obtained by a curtain attached to each, of a sort of gauze-work, formed of bamboo split very fine, and coloured green; these also serve to

keep out the flies, while they admit air and all the light considered necessary by an Anglo-Indian, who seldom allows a single ray to penetrate into his *sanc-tum sanctorum*.

Many of the Cawnpore houses are splendidly furnished; the chairs, tables, and sofas being of valuable wood, richly carved, with cushions and coverings of damask: but the absence of curtains, pictures, and looking-glasses, which harbour too many musquitos and other insects to be introduced with impunity, and the bareness of the walls, whose sole ornaments consist of lamps in glass shades, detract from the general effect. The floors, which are of *chunam* (finely tempered lime), are covered in the first instance, with a matting, and in the second, with a *setringee*, a peculiar manufacture of the country, of an exceeding thick texture, and usually woven in shaded blue stripes; or with calico printed in Brussels patterns, and so closely resembling a carpet as to deceive all save practised eyes. This forms the general decoration of the houses in the upper provinces; and as it may appear to Europeans to be a very indifferent substitute for our worsted manufactures, it may be necessary to say a few words in explanation. With a little care, this apparently fragile material will

last three years ; for as the servants never enter the house with their feet covered, and the boots and shoes of the male residents or visitors, not being much used for walking, are lighter and less destructive than those intended for pedestrians, comparatively little damage is done to the floor-cloth. The bungalow will require a new *chopper*, and a general repair, once in three years, and when this takes place, new cloths are put down.

At Mirzapore, a native city between Benares and Allahabad, there is a manufactory for carpets, which are scarcely inferior to those of Turkey : but this fabric is too thick and warm for Indian wear, excepting during the cold season. The exterior of a bungalow is usually very unpicturesque, bearing a strong resemblance to an overgrown barn ; the roof slopes down from an immense height to the verandah, and whatever be the covering, whether tiles or thatch, it is equally ugly : in many places the cantonments present to the eye a succession of huge conical roofs, resting upon low pillars ; but in Cawnpore the addition of stone fronts to some of the houses, and of bowed ends to others, give somewhat of architectural ornament to the station.

The gardens rank amongst the finest in India. In consequence of there being so many settled residents,

they are much cultivated and improved ; all the European vegetables, with the exception of broad beans, come to great perfection during the cold season, and the grapes and peaches, which are not common to other stations, are particularly fine. The pine-apple does not grow in the upper provinces, but the mangos, plantains, melons, oranges, shaddocks, custard-apples, limes, and guavas, are of the finest quality. These gardens, intermixed with forest trees, give Cawnpore a very luxuriant appearance ; it is an oasis reclaimed from the desert, for all around wastes of sand extend to a considerable distance.

In the centre of the cantonments, and on the highest ground, are two stone buildings of a very imposing exterior,—the assembly-rooms and the theatre ; the latter, a long oval, surrounded by a colonnade of pillars of the Roman Doric order, though ornamental to the station, is not very well adapted to the purpose for which it was intended : a horse-shoe form would have been better suited for the accommodation of an audience, for the spectators, who are seated in the back rows of the pit (there are no boxes) have little chance of hearing what is going on upon the stage.

Beyond the theatre, the road leads to the race-

course, which is approached by a long avenue well planted on either side, and watered during the dry season. This avenue forms the evening drive, and at sunset it is thronged with carriages of every description, and equestrians mounted upon all sorts of horses. Chariots, barouches, brichtskas, and double phætons, fresh from the best builders of London or Calcutta, appear amid old coaches, old socia-bles, rickety landaus, buggies, stanhopes, tilburies, and palanquin-carriages,—the latter not unfrequently drawn by bullocks, and all in various stages of dilapidation, for no one in India cares about being seen in a shabby vehicle ; those which have borne the wear and tear of the jungles for many a long day, are still deemed fit for service at Cawnpore, for there is little of that false shame to be found amongst the Indian community, which is productive of so much mortification and privation at home. The equestrians present an equally incongruous appearance,—the tall English charger, the smaller but handsome offspring of the Company's stud, and the graceful Arab, prance along by the side of the wild horses and shaggy ponies of native breed.

The Course, as it is termed, skirts a wide plain bounded to the right by the native city, which,

though possessing nothing worthy of a visit, forms a pretty object in the distance ; its mosques and pagodas peeping from the summit of a woody ridge. The plain also affords a busy, and to a stranger's eyes, an interesting scene. Groupes of natives are to be seen seated round their fires, cooking, eating, or singing after a repast, while the stately elephant, and strings of home-bound camels, loaded with forage, look like giant phantoms as the twilight deepens.

The mixture of foreign and familiar objects at Cawnpore, to a person newly arrived in India, is very singular. In smaller stations, it is impossible ever to forget that we are far from home ; but here, surrounded by Europeans, and beguiled by the throng of English-built carriages into the idea that we are in some old accustomed spot, the sudden appearance of a camel or an elephant, or a fantastic groupe of natives, seems quite startling.

Upon one evening in the week, the Course is deserted for the band of the King's dragoon regiment, which is assembled in a convenient place near the riding-school, and on these occasions the illusion is the most perfect. The equipages are drawn up two or three deep in a circle, many of the equestrians dismount, and lounging from carriage to carriage, con-

verse with the inmates of each : we forget for a short period that we are exiles, but as the night darkens the charm is dispelled. Returning homewards, the cries of jackals burst upon the ear, and lights glaring between the trees in the compounds display domestic arrangements which savour strongly of a foreign land : troops of servants are to be seen carrying covered dishes from the cook-room to the house, and *hookah-badars*, seated on the ground in the open air, are employed in making preparations for their masters' enjoyment of the fragrant weed, with its accompaniments of rose-water and other costly appendages of the *chillum*. We can no longer fancy ourselves in England, but the scene is animated and pleasing, and when, arriving at our own abode, we find the house lighted up, the table laid, and the servants in attendance, were it not for that home-sickness of the heart, from which comparatively few Anglo-Indians are exempt, we might be content with a lot cast upon the plains of Hindostan.

There are two regular chaplains on the establishment, but Cawnpore is destitute of a church. No engineer officer will undertake to erect one for the sum offered by government, and in these days of cutting and clipping, no one feels willing to sub-

scribe towards a building, which all agree it is the bounden duty of the gentlemen in Leadenhall-street to provide for their poor servants. The service, under these disadvantageous circumstances, is performed alternately at each end of the cantonments; the riding-school of the King's dragoons being given up on one Sunday, and a small bungalow near the infantry lines, in which marriages and christenings are performed, being appropriated in turn to the dwellers in the neighbourhood: neither will accommodate the whole of the station at once. This state of things is really disgraceful to Cawnpore, and unless some very active engineer officer should be appointed, and exceedingly vivid representations made of the grievance, it is likely to continue, for money seems to become scarcer in India every day.

Cawnpore, though usually a gay station, is, of course, subject to the vicissitudes produced by the fluctuating state of Indian society. It cannot, however, be so much affected by party-spirit, or the indisposition of leading residents to enter into amusements, as smaller places, and amongst so many families, an agreeable circle must always be found. In its best days, the entertainments are various, and suited to the different seasons; and

notwithstanding the difficulty which is always found amid amateurs to "settle the play," the theatre is generally opened once a month, even during the hot winds. The performances are of course very unequal, depending frequently upon extraneous aid. It is no uncommon circumstance to request the attendance of the Roscius of some distant station, and the arrival of the "star" secures a full audience. The house is very elegantly fitted up, the benches in the parterre being provided with handsomely-carved backs; while all the other ornaments are particularly chaste and appropriate. It is very easy of access, several doors opening on the verandah; these outlets, however, though convenient and necessary to secure the circulation of air, are unfavourable to the transmission of sound; but altogether there can scarcely be a prettier scene than that which is afforded by this bright saloon, when crowded by officers decked in gay uniforms, and interspersed with parties of well-dressed ladies, who, however, bear a small proportion to the beaux, for independent of travellers and occasional visitants, it is seldom that there are more than forty belonging to a certain rank who are attached to the station, and this is considered a large number out of Calcutta.

Much taste and talent is usually displayed in the scenery and dresses, and with one drawback—the performance of female characters by the fiercer sex—the Cawnpore theatricals are really delightful. Though sometimes an ambitious aspirant may insist upon tearing passion to rags in lofty verse, such exhibitions are comparatively rare; light farces and gay comedy are usually preferred, both by the actors and the audience, and the whim and humour frequently displayed would do credit to veteran stagers.

Outside of the theatre, the carriages and servants in waiting form a singular scene; palanquins, buggies, and vehicles of all descriptions are brought into requisition; half the attendants compose themselves to sleep, while the other half are smoking; but when summoned, they vie with their brethren in London in creating bustle and confusion, each thinking his own honour implicated in keeping up the consequence of his master.

After the play, it is customary to end the evening with a supper and ball at the neighbouring assembly rooms; the tables are laid out, and the *khidmutgars*, watching the movements of their masters and mistresses, place themselves behind their chairs, and produce plates, knives, forks and

glasses,—a singular custom in the upper provinces, where those articles are scarce, and where the guests at large parties are invited to come “camp-fashion,” that is, to provide their own spoons, &c. The Cawnpore assembly-rooms are extremely handsome; those apartments devoted to dancing and the supper are built in the Anglo-Indian style, being divided down the length by two rows of pillars, leaving a wide space in the centre; sofas are placed between the pillars, and floods of light stream from the wall-shades and chandeliers. The floors are boarded: no common circumstance in India, where the depredations of the white ants are so much dreaded.

None, save those who have danced upon a mat covering a chunam floor, can truly appreciate the luxury of boards; and the English belle, swimming through a quadrille on a warm summer evening, can form no idea of the fatigues which her Indian friends are undergoing, while performing the same evolutions upon a clay ground, the thermometer up to a hundred, and in a perfect atmosphere of musquitos. That dancing altogether should not be banished from the Company's territories by universal consent, seems very surprising; yet so perverse is the human disposition, that an amusement the least calculated for the climate, is the most

popular all over India. When other music cannot be procured, drums and fifes are introduced, and imagination can scarcely conceive the variety of torture to which the unhappy dancer is subjected. The natives look on in surprise, wondering that the *saihs* should take so much trouble, since professional persons are to be hired in every bazaar to perform for their amusement.

But to return to the ball-room at Cawnpore. Upon state occasions the whole compound is lighted up ; an operation in which the natives delight, and which is performed by driving bamboos into the ground, and fastening a small *chiraug* (an earthen lamp) to each: these cressets afford a very bright light, and when they are numerous, and the night is dark, they have a splendid effect. Strangers are directed to private houses on party nights by the illuminations in the neighbourhood, and when there is a very large assembly, the dusky countenances and white drapery of the attendants, who flock in multitudes to the spot, are never seen to so much advantage. Besides the coachmen, grooms, running footmen, palanquin and torch-bearers, each person takes one servant, and those who affect state, two or three, to wait upon them during the evening, and as the superior domestics dress very splen-

didly, they perform no inconsiderable part in the pageant.

During the cold season, all the infantry corps forming the garrison of Cawnpore, usually encamp upon a wide plain in the vicinity, for the convenience of better ground for the performance of military evolutions, than is to be found in the cantonments. An Indian camp affords a very striking and curious spectacle, and though the admixture of trees adds much to its beauty and heightens its effect, yet when, as at Cawnpore, it arises in the midst of an uncultivated desert, the singularity of the scene it presents compensates for the loss of the more pleasing features of the landscape.

Regular streets and squares of canvas stretch over an immense tract; each regiment is provided with its bazaar in the rear, and far beyond the lines, the almost innumerable camp-followers of every description form their bivouacs. The tents of the commanding officers are indicated by small red flags; but in no place is it so easy for strangers to lose their way, there is so much uniformity in the several avenues, and the natives make such strange havoc of English names, that an hour may be spent in wandering before the abode of a

friend can be found. All the Mofussillites are accustomed to spend a large portion of their time under canvas, and in consequence of the necessity of providing a moveable habitation, there are few tents which do not boast more comfort than can be easily imagined by those who are only acquainted with an European marquee. All are double, the interior and exterior covering being about a foot and a-half apart; those which are double-poled contain several commodious apartments, and are furnished with glass doors to fit into the openings. They are usually lined with some gaily-coloured chintz; the floors are well-covered with *setringees*, and they have convenient space enclosed at the rear by *kanauts* (a wall of canvas) for out-offices and bathing-rooms. Moveable stoves are sometimes provided for the cold weather, but there is a better contrivance, inasmuch as smoke is thereby avoided, in an imitation of the Spanish *brassero*. A large brass or copper basin, in common use, called a *chillum chee*, mounted on an iron tripod, is filled with red wood embers, and fuel thus prepared, without having the deleterious effect of charcoal, diffuses a genial warmth throughout the tent, and is very necessary in the evening; for though, during the cold season, the sun is still too fierce at noon-

day to confront without shelter, as soon as its rays are withdrawn, intense cold succeeds, a sharp piercing wind sweeps along the plains, and the thermometer sinks below the freezing point.

The transition is so severe between the heat of the day and the frost of the night, that European dogs can only be preserved from its effects by the addition of warm clothing. Every evening, at sun-set, the servant who has the care of the canine race, equips each animal with a quilted coat, which is taken off in the morning. These rapid and striking changes are extremely trying to delicate constitutions, and there can scarcely be any thing more disagreeable than a state of affairs of constant occurrence, namely, exposure at one and the same time to a hot sun and a bleak wind.

Under the noontide glare, the white walls of an extensive camp stretched over a bare and sandy plain, are exceedingly painful to the eyes, but in the twilight, and at night, it assumes a romantic aspect. Innumerable fires arise in every direction, horses picketed, camels and bullocks reposing in groupes, present endless varieties of forms, all softened or exaggerated by the deepening shadows, or flickering lights.

The artillery stationed at Cawnpore, horse and

foot, are sufficiently numerous to form a camp of their own, which occupies another plain of vast extent beyond some very wild ravines. Upon reviews and grand field-days, it is usual for the commandants of all the corps to give public breakfasts in turn, and these military spectacles rank amongst the most characteristic and spirit-stirring amusements of the East. All officers, whether upon leave or at Cawnpore on military duties unconnected with field displays, such as witnesses on courts-martial, &c. are expected to attend; wherefore the ladies are always sure of a gallant escort of beaux, not actively engaged in the toils of the day. Many parties proceed to the field on horseback, attended by *syces* on foot, well armed with spears, in order to ward off the attacks of loose chargers, who after throwing their riders run wild over the plains; a frequent occurrence where natives congregate, mounted upon the most vicious animals that ever submitted to the rein. Some of the ladies are conveyed upon elephants, but the majority go in carriages, which are drawn up at a convenient distance from the scene of action. The neighbouring city sends forth its multitudes on horseback and on foot, on camels, or in vehicles of native construction, and the sandy wilderness literally swarms with life.

To the beautiful precision of peaceable military evolutions succeeds the mimic war. The shock of contending battalions, the charge, the dispersion, the rally, and the retreat: squadrons of cavalry tear up the ground with their hoofs, "loud roars the red artillery," and now with their shining panoply glittering in the sun, and now obscured by clouds of dust, the assailants and the assailed appear and disappear like some vision raised by an enchanter's wand. At the breaking-up of the field-day, the invited guests gladly adjourn to the less intellectual part of the entertainment; dressing tents are provided for the ladies, who shake off the morning's dust, and repair their charms, by rearranging the hair, and re-smoothing the drapery. The gentlemen also make a brief toilette, and then the bugle summons to breakfast. To unaccustomed eyes, nothing can be more surprising than the spacious saloons thrown open upon these occasions for the reception of company. I remember once losing my way in the intricate passages connecting the apartments of a tent, fitted up for the accommodation of a large party of ladies.

An Indian breakfast is allowed to be an unrivalled repast, and it is to be found in as full perfection in the midst of a desert, as when spread

upon the princely boards of the City of Palaces. Indian servants never permit their masters to regret the want of regular kitchens; all places appear to be the same to them, and our *déjeûnés à la fourchette*, in camp, could not be surpassed in the Land of Cakes. Fish of every kind, fresh, dried, pickled, or preserved, or hermetically sealed in tin; delicate fricassees, risolles, croquettes, omelettes, and curries of all descriptions; cold meats and game of all sorts; patés, jellies, and jams from London and Lucknow; fruits and sweetmeats; with cakes in endless variety, splendidly set out in china, cut glass, and silver, the guests providing their own tea-cups, plates, &c.

There are races at Cawnpore during the cold season, and as they have been long established, they generally afford good sport. These races form a very amusing scene, the male spectators, with few exceptions, appearing in masquerade; for the object being to divest the meeting of all military shew, the young men endeavour to imitate, as nearly as their wardrobes will permit, the dress and appointments of English country gentlemen, farmers, and even rustics: rather a difficult achievement, where there is so little opportunity of keeping up a stock of plain clothes, and where young men, not

anticipating the necessity of assuming a peaceable character, have neglected to provide themselves with a fitting disguise. Ingenuity is racked to find substitutes for the coveted garments; happy are those who possess a single-breasted coat, topped boots, and corduroys; round hats and jockey-caps are at a premium, and native tailors are employed to manufacture fac-similes of uncouth garments from all sorts of materials. Many of the gentlemen ride their own matches, and there is generally a very amusing *melée*, in which all descriptions of horses are entered, and which affords the greatest sport to those lookers-on not interested in the favourites. Prodigious quantities of gloves and lavender-water are lost and won by the ladies, and ruinous consequences too frequently result from the more serious transactions of the betting-stand.

Gambling is one of the great evils of Indian life; and though much more limited in its extent than in former times, it is still productive of debt, difficulty, and disgrace to numbers of heedless young men. In Cawnpore, it is sometimes carried to a very dangerous extent; more particularly at those seasons when there are few balls and parties to divert the attention of idle youths from cards and dice: and at those periods the want of a public

library is also severely felt. The supply of books is seldom equal to the demand; for though there are numerous clubs established in the various corps, and a few private collections belonging to the residents, the works which are to be found in all are chiefly of a light and desultory description. Books of instruction and reference are rarely to be purchased or borrowed, and however anxious young men may be to make themselves acquainted with the natural productions of India, or to study its political history, they must remain destitute of the means, unless they can afford to send to Calcutta or to England for the necessary materials.

Had the government established libraries at the head-quarters of every district, a trifling subscription from the temporary residents would have sufficed to keep them up, and the advantage to young men of a studious turn would have been incalculable: but there are no facilities given for the acquisition of knowledge, and it must be picked up under the most disadvantageous circumstances. This, with the exception of Mhow, where a library has been established, is the case in every part of the Bengal presidency; and when the extreme youth of the cadets who are sent from school to fill up the vacancies of the Indian army, and their want of

opportunities for improvement after their arrival, are taken into consideration, the highly intellectual state of society throughout Hindostan must excite surprise.

A church and a well-furnished library alone are wanting to render Cawnpore as delightful a residence, as an eastern climate and military duties will permit. It has not the reputation of being unhealthy, though, in the rainy season, it shares with other stations the prevalent diseases of fever and ague, and being the high road to the frontiers, many travellers pause on their journey, after having received the seeds of their disorders in distant places, to lay their remains in the crowded cemetery of Cawnpore. During the hot winds it is burning, stifling, smothering; but all places liable to this terrible visitation (the simoom and sirocco of travellers' tales) are equally scorching, and in some districts the blasts from the gaseous furnace, from which the plague must emanate, blow all night, whereas at Cawnpore they subside at sun-set.

Persons newly arrived from England or Calcutta, may deem Cawnpore a semi-barbarous place, since wolves stray into the compounds, and there are bungalows in which the doors, destitute of locks or

handles, will not shut: but the arrivals from out-stations, dwellers in the jungle, companions of bears and boars (biped and quadruped), look upon it as an earthly paradise. It is well supplied with every article of European manufacture necessary for comfort, or even luxury, though it must be confessed that they are frequently too high-priced to suit subalterns' allowances. The bazaars are second to none in India; beef, mutton, fish, and poultry being of the finest quality: vegetables of all kinds may be purchased by those who have not gardens of their own, there being a sufficient demand to induce the natives to cultivate exotics for the market. In addition to the shops kept by Europeans, there are many warehouses filled with English and French goods, belonging to Hindoo and Moosulman merchants; and the jewellers are scarcely inferior to those of Delhi.

Cawnpore is celebrated for the manufacture of saddlery, harness, and gloves; though less durable than those of English make, the cheapness and beauty of the two former articles recommend them to the purchaser; and the gloves offer a very respectable substitute for the importations from France. Prints of fashions supply the mantua-makers and tailors with ideas, and as there is no lack of materials,

the ladies of Cawnpore are distinguished in the Mofussil for a more accurate imitation of the toilettes of London and Paris, than can be achieved at more remote stations. Indeed, the contrast between the female residents, and their visitants from the surrounding jungles, is often extremely amusing.

The river's bank affords some very fine situations for bungalows, and the inequality of the ground offers many advantages to those in the interior of the cantonments. The roads are kept in good order, and as they stretch along thick plantations occasionally relieved by glimpses of European houses, or cross the broad parade-grounds and other open tracts, the bits of native scenery, a small mosque, a pagoda, or a well, peeping from the trees; the long alleys of a bazaar, and the open sheds of numerous artizans, present so many pleasing combinations, that the eye must be dull of perception which cannot find an infinity of beauty in the various drives and rides. Lucknow, the capital of the neighbouring kingdom of Oude, is only a few marches distant from Cawnpore, and forms a favourite excursion, more especially whenever any particular festivities are going on at the court. In the proper season, hunting-parties are

also frequently made to look for tigers and wild hogs in the islands of the Ganges, or amid the deep jungles of its opposite shore.

To the antiquary the neighbourhood of Cawnpore is peculiarly interesting, for many of the learned have agreed that it contains the site of the ancient city of Palibothra.

CHAPTER IV.

FEMININE EMPLOYMENTS, AMUSEMENTS, AND
DOMESTIC ECONOMY.

A PLEASANT paper, which appeared some years ago in the *New Monthly Magasine*, in enumerating the sources of female happiness, proved incontestably, that they were infinitely more abundant than those which were open to the male portion of the community belonging to a certain class. The writer, it appears, never could have been in India, or he would have excepted the cases of his Eastern acquaintance; for, unhappily, in the clime of the sun, it is exceedingly difficult to find expedients either to trifle with or kill the enemy; and nearly unmitigated *ennui* is the lot of the majority of luckless women who, in a less subduing atmosphere, might have amused themselves very respectably by winding silk, cutting paper, or tatting. Manufactures of bread-seals and bead-bracelets do not flourish in India, partly from the difficulty of obtaining patterns and materials, and partly from the

absence of stimulants to industry. Anglo-Indian ladies have not the same constant intercourse with each other, which prevails at home ; the work-table does not bring parties of young people together, united by a similarity of pursuit, and emulous to outdo each other in some ornamental piece of stitchery ; they cannot watch the progress of their friends' undertakings, and, excepting in some few cases, where the mind and the fingers are equally active, and where the heat of the climate is beneficial to the constitution, idleness is the order of the day. During the greater part of the year, the slightest exertion is a toil ; and habits acquired in the sultry season, are not easily laid aside at the arrival of the brief period of cold weather. The punkah also is very inimical to occupation ; there is no possibility of enduring existence out of the reach of the influence of this enormous fan, and while it is waving to and fro, weights are requisite to secure every light article upon the table : should they be unadvisedly removed, away flies the whole apparatus to different parts of the room, and the degree of irritability produced by trifling circumstances of this nature, superadded to the excessive heat and the perpetual buzzing and stinging of musquitoes, can scarcely be imagined by those who have never ex-

perienced the difficulty of pursuing any employment under the infliction of so many annoyances. Still, however, the grand cause of female listlessness may be traced to the comparatively little communication which takes place between the ladies of different families. Morning visits, excepting those of mere ceremony, are left to the gentlemen, who proceed from house to house in their daily tour, with perseverance which defies the thermometer.

This being the state of affairs, it might be supposed that conversation will assume a higher tone than when needles and thimbles, satin-stitch and chain-stitch, supply the *matériel*: and where there are no old maids, to whom (where they abound) credit is given for the invention of every gossip's tale, it might be presumed that scandal would be wanting. It is grievous to be obliged to vindicate the tabby race at the expense of that part of the creation who are styled its lords; but, sooth to say, there is no watering-place, country town, or village in England, which can match an Indian station, whether at the presidencies or in the Mofussil, for censoriousness; and it is equally matter of fact, that the male residents, young and old, married and single, if not always the actual authors

of the slander, are the purveyors, disseminators, and reporters. It is to them that the ladies are indebted for all the news, private and public, at the place; they report the progress of flirtations, and hazard conjectures upon their probable issue. They are narrow observers of what is passing at every house, and carry a detailed account to the neighbouring families: not failing, of course, to put their own colouring upon every thing which they relate, or to add (for the sake of heightening the effect) a few incidents necessary to give piquancy to their narratives. Nor do these gallant cavaliers disdain to attend to trifles which are generally deemed to belong exclusively to the feminine department; they condescend to report upon flounces and furbelows, descending to all the minutiae of plaits and puckering, and criticising the whole paraphernalia, from the crowning comb to the shoe-tie. Their descriptive powers are particularly called forth by the appearance of new arrivals. Woe to the unfortunate matron or spinster, who shall be the first to bring out any striking change of fashion! she is the mark for every witling; not a tongue is silent; it is an offence to the whole community to convict it of being behind the modes of London or Paris, and the attempt to instruct is

resented as an imposition. Pretty girls often sit at their first balls without partners, none of the young men having nerve enough to dance with persons, whom they and their associates have so unmercifully cut up. However exactly they may be dressed after the most approved costume of a leading milliner at home, they are considered *outré* by the old-fashioned figures with whom they are doomed to mingle; and though their patterns are gradually adopted, nothing can be more ungracious than the manner in which persons convinced against their will, conform to any thing new and strange. In all this the gentlemen are the ringleaders; it is the dread of their ridicule which influences the weaker sex. It may be said that their sarcasms are encouraged by their female friends, and their gossiping tales well received; but as they are clearly the majority, it must be in their power to introduce a better system. Complaints are eternally made of the frivolity of the women, but persons well acquainted with society in India, may be permitted to doubt whether they should be made to bear the whole burthen of the charge. A female coterie is a thing almost unknown; the dread of exposure to the heat of the sun prevents ladies from congregating together in the morning; and at dinner-parties and balls they are wholly en-

grossed by the gentlemen. It is thought very extraordinary, and rather disgraceful, to see a lady enter a room without the arm of a male escort; the usual complement is two. At morning calls, the master of the mansion, as soon as it is announced that there is a *Bibby Saib* (a lady) coming, is expected to rush to the door of the house, and hand the fair visitor in, though she may be accompanied by one or more gentlemen. Ladies are never seen walking together in a ball-room; and though the most elegant female can scarcely preserve a graceful appearance while supported on each side by a male arm, it is the custom in India, and the exhibition must be made, upon pain of incurring the imputation of desiring a *tête-à-tête*. Attention and flattery will usually reconcile a woman to the loss of the society of her own sex—but by many the privation is severely felt; they miss the warm and cordial greetings, the delight of a reunion after brief absences, and the pleasing confidential chatting, to which they have been accustomed in their native land. On the score of gaiety, much is lost by the separation of the female portion of an assembly from each other, for nothing can be more formally decorous than the appearance of an Indian ball-room, where the promenaders move round in lugu-

brisk order, and where cold and distant recognitions alone pass between intimate acquaintance. The handings, and shawlings, and fannings, of male attendants, which a lady must change perpetually if she would avoid the appearance of retaining regular *cavalieri serventi*, are poor substitutes for the groups of gay girls with whom she was wont to join in animated converse. At length, perchance, estranged from her own sex by long habit, she acquires a distaste for female society, and, should she return to England, will talk of India as a paradise, and feel neglected and miserable when no longer surrounded by a troop of gentlemen.

In the Upper Provinces, this state of affairs is universal; but in Calcutta, a little change takes place; during the cold season, ladies spend their mornings with each other, and shop and visit together; those also who do not dance, occupy the same sofas in a ball-room: but there always appears to be a want of congeniality amongst them; a civil sort of indifference seems the prevailing feeling,* for there is less of rivalry and jealousy

* The writer does not intend to insinuate that there are no such things as female friendships in India, or that instances of real and cordial affection, subsisting between individuals of the softer sex, are of rare occurrence: it is the general tone and manner which is here described, and which is sufficiently obvious to surprise a stranger.

than is to be met with elsewhere: a circumstance easily to be accounted for, since the majority are married women, and, generally speaking, models of propriety of conduct. A few there are, certainly, as must be the case in all large communities, who afford food for scandal, either by actual levity of demeanour, or a careless gaiety too closely approaching it; but all persons who have seen the world will acknowledge, that the strict rules of propriety are less frequently violated by the Anglo-Indian ladies than by those comprising the gay circles of society in Europe.

To many persons, the circumstance of having nothing to do, will compensate for the dearth of amusement; and indolent habits, if not natural to the disposition, may be acquired. An active spirit will of course always find employment for itself; but more than ordinary powers, both of mind and constitution, are requisite to struggle against the influence of the climate, and the difficulties which an imperfect knowledge of the Hindoostanee language throw in the way of household management. After breakfast, the ladies of a family usually employ themselves, while awaiting the arrival of visitors (whose calls take place as early as ten o'clock), in superintending the labours of their *dirzees* (tailors)—a severe trial of patience. Though

very neat workmen, few amongst them are equal to the task of cutting out; and they do not profess to fit on, a business which is left to the lady and her *ayah*. If a pattern dress be given to them, they copy it with accuracy: but have no idea of the method of reducing or enlarging the dimensions, to suit the peculiar figures of their employers. Like the brethren of their craft in other countries, they require to be sharply looked after, being much addicted to the abstraction of those remnants of odds and ends, which in England go under the denomination of 'cabbage.' These perquisites of their office are turned to great advantage in the manufacture of skull-caps, called *topees*, which are invariably worn by their fellow-domestics when off duty, and which, especially if formed of gay silk, lace, or embroidery, find a ready sale. Many droll scenes take place between ladies and their *dirrees*; the horror, consternation, and rage of the former, when they discover that some precious garment has been spoiled beyond repair, and the blank looks of the latter, while their handy-works are held up in judgment against them, are frequently so exceedingly ludicrous, that they cannot fail to excite the risibility of the bystanders. Happy may the unfortunate tailor think himself,

if the arrival of a visitor should suspend hostilities, and give his justly-incensed mistress time to cool. Nor is it the *dirzee* alone who excites his lady's wrath; servants, those fruitful sources of plague in all civilized countries, sometimes contrive, in India, to occasion an infinity of trouble. In justice, however, to this maligned race, it must be admitted, that reasonable people, acquainted with the customs of the natives, or willing to be instructed in them, may escape many of the pains and penalties usually connected with a large establishment. It is astonishing how easily the multitude of domestics, necessarily attached to an Anglo-Indian household, may be managed, and in almost every instance it is the fault of the master or the mistress if the servants be disreputable or inattentive to their duties. Kind treatment, and the accurate payment of wages at stated periods, are alone necessary to secure the attachment of numerous dependants; and it is much to be regretted, that ill-temper, and disregard of prejudices, should, in so many instances, produce a contrary effect.

An establishment in the Bengal presidency is composed of various descriptions of Moosulman and Hindoo servants, all of whom have their

respective offices. The *khansamah*, or head of the household, must be a Moosulman, and it is of great consequence that he should be an active and respectable man, for upon his exertions the comfort of a family must in a great measure depend. He acts in the capacity of major-domo, purveyor, and confectioner, superintending the cooking department, making the jellies and jams, and attending to all the more delicate and elaborate details of the *cuisine*. All the other servants are, or ought to be, under his immediate control, and when he is made answerable for their conduct, things usually go on very smoothly. In addition to the *khansamah*, whose place at table is behind his master's chair, there are other attendants of his own class, called *khidmutgars*, one being attached to each individual of the family. Strictly speaking, the duty of these men is merely to attend at meals; but they will cook upon occasion, and indeed are fond of shewing their skill in the art, and also, where economy is considered, act as the *abdar* (butler), who cools the wine, &c., or as the *hookah-badar* (pipe-bearer), and chillum manufacturer. But servants are often especially retained for these purposes; and when that is the case, the master of the mansion, either abroad or at home,

is attended by his *khansamah*, *abdar*, and *hookah-badar*, all splendidly dressed, and standing at the back of his chair. One or two cooks, according to the style of living, and the same number of *mas-saulchees* (scullions), complete the table servants, who must all be Moosuhmans, the Hindoos objecting, on account of their religion, to have anything to do with the kitchen, carrying their scruples so far, as to refuse to touch a clean plate, in consequence of its having been defiled by a portion of a slaughtered animal. The *sirdar bearer*, a Hindoo, acts as valet to the master of the house; he has the care of the oil and wax-candles, and sees to the lighting of the lamps, the dusting of the furniture, and making the beds; he is assisted in these concerns by one or two mates (according to the number of individuals belonging to the family), who pull the punkahs, and in a large establishment, where four or eight are kept, carry the palanquin.

The *mēter* (sweeper), a very essential person, is a low-caste Hindoo, above all prejudice, who sweeps the floors, clears away dirt, and will take care of a dog or other unclean animal. These, with the *ayah* (lady's-maid), the *metranee* (her assistant), and the *dirsee*, compose the servants

employed in in-door offices,—to whom, however, the *bheestie*, or water-carrier, may be added, who supplies the bathing-rooms with water. The *chuprassies* are running-footmen, employed to attend a carriage or a palanquin, to go upon messages, carry letters, bottles, books, or other light articles which they can take in their hands. They are usually, if Hindoo, high-caste men, brahmains being frequently candidates for this office, and in the upper provinces of Hindoostan are seldom seen without swords by their sides. The messengers of Bengal, called *hurkarus*, are a very inferior description of persons, performing the same duties: they sit in the ante-rooms, and are always ready to answer to the “*qui hi?*” (who waits?)

The out-door servants are almost innumerable; every horse must be supplied with a groom and grass-cutter; few houses are destitute either of a garden or a small piece of ground, which requires the care and attention of one or more persons (*mālles*); then there is the *dobhy* (washer-man), the *bery-wallah* who has the charge of the goats or sheep; men or boys to look after the poultry; extra water-carriers, and other extras, *ad infinitum*.

In Calcutta every house must have a porter, or

durwān; and in the provinces, a *chokeydar*, or watchman, at night.*

When the family assemble for the day, the servants in attendance *salaam* as each person enters the breakfast-room. The *khidmutgars*, of course, are at their posts, and might be deemed sufficient for the purpose,—but the tea-kettle being under the especial superintendence of one of the bearers, he is seldom found willing to entrust it to other hands, scrupulously performing the duties of his office: and although there may be half a dozen other servants in the room, he is seen to fill the tea-pot, or at any rate to bring in the kettle from an iron tripod, called an *ungeeta*, the substitute for an urn, which is filled with lighted charcoal, and kept either outside the house, or in an open verandah. During breakfast, the *mallee* makes his appearance with his baskets of fruit and vegetables, and a small bouquet for each lady placed upon the

* In large establishments in Calcutta, a *sircar* or steward is kept, who receives no pay, but takes a per-centage out of all the money passing through his hands. The wages of other servants vary from ten rupees to three per month; they feed and clothe themselves, and live in small houses in the compound; a few of the bearers sleep in the house, wrapping themselves up in cloths, and spreading a mat under them, upon the floor.

top. The fruits, &c. are neatly arranged in plantain-leaves, and as he offers his basket round the table, each person takes something, custard-apples, guavas, chillies, sallad, or cresses. After breakfast, the khansamah, who has made his bazaar early in the morning, either lays out his purchases in an ante-room, or sends them in to the lady upon dishes or in baskets; after they are inspected, he takes his orders and retires. The bed-rooms and bathing-rooms being properly arranged for the day, the bearers, with the exception of those left to pull the *punkahs*, betake themselves to their repose, lying down in all directions in the ante-chambers, well covered up to secure them from musquitoes, and looking like so many corpses swathed in grave-clothes.

Such is the state of affairs until the hour of *tiffin*; the chuprassies in attendance announcing guests, and ushering them in and out. As soon as the sun begins to decline, the water-carrier appears with his *mussuck*, and sprinkles the verandahs, and the *ehubootur*, a terrace raised in some elevated place. The *meters* come in with their brooms, and sweep the floors; the bearers draw up the *chiks* or blinds and beat the flies out, taking care to shut them again before they light the lamps, an operation

which is performed the instant it gets dark. Every sleeping-apartment is supplied with a lamp duly placed upon the dressing-table, or in a wall-shade, at the closing in of the brief twilight. Where there is an active and steady khansamah to see that that these things are regularly and thoroughly done, the lady of the house has very little trouble; but indifference to comfort and appearance upon her part, will invariably occasion idleness and slovenliness on that of the servants, exhibited in dusty, worm-eaten furniture, ragged mats, dirt and dilapidation of every kind; for a single day's neglect is quite sufficient to allow the multitudinous hosts of insects, which form the grand destructive power, to gain a-head. An ill-kept house in India is the most deplorable, comfortless-looking place imaginable; it is overrun with vermin of every kind; "rats and mice, and such small deer" disport themselves over it at all hours; frogs croak in the corners, and bats nestle in the cornices. The damps gathered on the mats produce plentiful crops of the endless varieties of the fungus tribe, and should not the red ants succeed in devouring their white brethren, not a door-post will remain in its proper position; while you cannot remove a chair or a table, without the risk of disturbing the family of a cen-

tipe. It is a good plan, even where the servants are most active, to walk quietly through the rooms, and order every article of furniture to change its place; for, at every thorough cleaning, the first rudiments of a rat's nest (where dogs and cats are not kept) may be detected; scorpions, either in an advanced or infant state, are certain to be found under the mats, together with such an incredible quantity of lizards' eggs, that you wonder whether the flies themselves could furnish food for the numberless broods, were they permitted to burst the shell. A lady desirous of preserving neatness and order throughout her dominions, will sometimes visit the cook-room, which is generally at a distance from the house, and take a peep, *en passant*, at the poultry-yard, and the domiciles of her servants. Native attendants have a pride in appearing to advantage, and will take care that nothing shall offend the lady's eye. The cook-room ought to be kept extremely clean; it is generally rather a small place, and so scantily furnished, compared with an English kitchen, that it is marvellous how it can be made to supply the endless number of dishes which issue from its humble roof: but the greater part of the preparations being carried on outside, and there

being always several ranges of hot hearths in the interior, the difficulties are not so great as may be imagined at first sight. The principal fuel in use is charcoal, and the meat is roasted *over*, and not *in front of*, the fire: an arrangement to which connoisseurs in the gastronomic science object.

Those ladies who are either Indian-born, or who have lived long enough in the country to acquire a perfect knowledge of its modes, language, and customs, frequently leave little for the khansamah to do; attending themselves at the godowns (store-rooms), and giving out each article for the day's consumption; seeing wood and charcoal weighed, oil measured, and eggs numbered. A saving in expense is no doubt effected by these exertions: but as, unhappily, they are usually attended by violent scolding matches, after the true Hindoostanee fashion, such minute attention to household affairs is not very desirable. By permitting the khansamah to gain a small profit on his bazaar-accounts, the service is made acceptable to a respectable man, who cannot afford to support a family in a becoming manner upon his bare wages; and a domestic of this description will in almost every case be found exceedingly faithful, attached to the person of his

master, and ready to submit to inconveniences* (which natives generally are not willing to bear), if necessary, to secure the comfort of the family he serves.

In India, we may almost invariably read the character of the master in the countenances and deportment of his servants. If they be handsomely, but not gaudily dressed, respectful but not servile in their demeanour, quiet, orderly, and contented, they bear evidence of the good qualities of their superiors ; but where servants exhibit any signs of terror or of absurd obsequiousness, where they never approach without their hands folded as if in prayer, and almost touch the earth in their *salaams* ; where they are dirty, ragged, noisy, and constantly changing, the head of the house may safely be pronounced tyrannical, unreasonable, or a bad paymaster,—a description of persons who will never succeed in retaining respectable domestics. A very short residence in the country is sufficient to render the natives well-acquainted with the characters of the Europeans round them ; and if once a disgraceful notoriety be obtained, none save thieves

* Such as removing to some remote district, a native of the Upper Provinces to Bengal, or *vice versa* ; going to the hills (the Himalaya), or on board ship.

and outcasts will take service where ill-treatment is sure to follow : hence the origin of the too numerous complaints of persons, who never can meet with a domestic to suit them, who refuse to yield to the customs of the country in which they are doomed to dwell, and consequently are attended only by those who are indifferent to loss of caste or of character.

The difficulty regarding female domestics is certainly very great. It is generally considered essential for the *ayah* to be a Moosulman woman, as none but a low Hindoo would take the office ; and it may safely be averred, that not one respectable woman out of a hundred is to be found in this class. The single circumstance of her mingling unveiled with the male domestics, is sufficient to shew that she has lost all claim to reputation ; she has seldom any good quality left, excepting honesty ; she is idle, slatternly, and dissipated, and frequently even too lazy to see that her assistant performs her duty. Few *ayahs* are at the slightest pains to make themselves acquainted with the mysteries of the European toilette ; they dress their ladies all awry, and martyrdom is endured whenever they take a pin in hand : they have no notion of lacing, buttoning, or hook-and-eyeing, and only shew themselves skilful

in the bathing-room, and in brushing and braiding the hair. Folding up dresses is an art wholly unknown, and Griselda herself would find it difficult to keep her temper in the midst of crushed flouncees, broken feathers, and gauzes eaten through and through by cock-roaches. European women, if attainable, demand enormous wages; they soon learn to give themselves airs, and require the attendance of natives during the hot weather: the Moosulman *ayah* is usually found the lesser evil of the two, and when she happens to be clever and active, she is a treasure beyond price.

It is advisable to make the *khansamah* engage all the inferior servants, and hold him answerable for their conduct; but there is one privilege usually enjoyed by him to its fullest extent, which it were better to abridge,—the selection of the dinner. He of course provides according to the notions of an Asiatic, who considers abundance to be essential to magnificence, and has no idea of modern European refinement. Anglo-Indians, for the most part, have left England too young to have lost their school-relish for ample fare: to people who know better, it is frequently more easy to fall into new customs than to combat prejudices, for they have not only those of their servants to encounter, but those also

of the whole community, who have been too long accustomed to see tables groaning beneath the weight of the feast, to be satisfied with the light viands served up at a London board. The receipt for an Indian dinner appears to be, to slaughter a bullock and a sheep, and place all the joints before the guests at once, with poultry, &c. to match. The natives are excellent cooks, and might easily be taught the most delicate arts of the *cuisine*; but as their own recipes differ exceedingly from ours, they can only acquire a knowledge of the European style from the instructions of their employers: their hashes, stews, and haricots, are excellent, but a prejudice exists against these preparations amidst the greater number of Anglo-Indians, who fancy that "black fellows" cannot do any thing beyond their own *pillaws*, and are always in dread of some abomination in the mixture: a vain and foolish alarm, where the servants are cleanly, and where no one ever objects to curry.

For these, or some other equally absurd reasons, made dishes form a very small portion of the entertainment given to a large party, which is usually composed of, in the first instance, an overgrown turkey (the fatter the better) in the centre, which is the place of honour; an enormous ham for its

vis-à-vis; at the top of the table appears a sirloin or round of beef; at the bottom a saddle of mutton; legs of the same, boiled and roasted; figure down the sides, together with fowls, three in a dish, geese, ducks, tongues, humps, pigeon-pies, curry and rice of course, mutton-chops and chicken-cutlets. Fish is of little account, except for breakfast, and can only maintain its post as a side-dish.

In the hot season, fish caught early in the morning would be much deteriorated before the dinner hour, it is therefore eaten principally at breakfast. There are no *entremets*, no removes; the whole course is put on the table at once, and when the guests are seated, the soup is brought in. The reason of the delay of a part of the entertainment which invariably takes the precedence in England, is rather curious. All the guests are attended by their own servants, who congregate round the cook-room, and assist to carry in the dinner; were the soup to enter first, these worthies would rush to their masters' chairs, and leave the discomfited *khansamah* at the head of his dishes, without a chance of getting them conveyed to table by his *mussaulchees* under an hour, at least. The second course is nearly as substantial as the first, and makes as formidable an appearance: beef-steaks figure amongst the deli-

cacies, and smaller articles, such as quails or ortolans, are piled up in hecatombs. At the tables of old Indians, the fruit makes a part of the second course; but regular desserts are coming, though slowly, into fashion.

There is always a mixture of meanness and magnificence in every thing Asiatic; the splendid appointments of silver and china, which deck the board, have not their proper accompaniment of rich damask,* but appear upon common cotton cloths, the manufacture of the country. All the glasses are supplied with silver covers, to keep out the flies: but the glasses themselves are not changed when the cloth is removed. It will easily be perceived that there is an air of barbaric grandeur about these feasts, which reminds a stranger of the descriptions he has read of the old baronial style of living; but, unfortunately, the guests invited to assist at the demolition of innumerable victims, want the keen appetite which rendered their martial ancestors such valiant trencher-men. The *burra khanas*, as they are called, at Calcutta, certainly

* It is supposed that, as there are no mangles in India, damask table-linen would lose its glossy hue: but the heavy irons used by the *dhobys* answer all the purposes of those huge machines.

afford a festal display, in which the eye, if not the palate, must take pleasure. In a hall paved with marble, supported by handsome stone pillars, and blazing with lights, sixty guests, perhaps, are assembled; punkahs wave above their heads, and chowries of various kinds, some of peacocks' plumes, others of fleecy cow-tails, mounted upon silver handles, are kept in continual agitation, to beat off the flies, by attendants beautifully clad in white muslin. At every third or fourth chair, the *hookah*, reposing on an embroidered carpet, exhibits its graceful splendours, but unhappily the fumes of the numerous chillums, the steam of the dishes, the heat of the lamps, and the crowds of attendants, effectually counteract the various endeavours made to procure a free circulation of air. The petticoated bottles, which make the circuit of the tables instead of decanters, form one of the peculiarities of an Indian table; their ugliness is compensated by their utility, as the wine is kept cool by the wetted cloths which are somewhat fancifully arranged round the necks of the bottles: port, claret, and Burgundy are characteristically attired in crimson, with white flounces; while sherry and Madeira appear in bridal costume. Mr. Hood's pencil would revel in the delineation of these grotesque appendages. The

verandahs present a bustling scene, which, to unaccustomed eyes, is both curious and attractive. There the *hookah-badars* are busy preparing fresh chillums, the *khidmutgars* are putting the tea-equipage in order, and the fires of the *ungeetas* draw groups around them, for at no season of the year is a native averse to the genial warmth of the bright red coal, over which he bends with delight, while Europeans, in despite of *punkahs*, are fainting from excess of heat.

Suppers are the fac-similes of dinners, excepting that there is only one course, and a greater abundance of *Multāanee* soup, which seldom appears excepting at tiffin and supper. Where large parties assemble, a whole sheep is considered necessary to make the stock of this liquid curry, which differs materially from its European namesake; lime-juice and curds forming the principal condiments. It is no uncommon thing to see hot sirloins, rounds and ribs of beef, saddles and haunches of mutton at suppers, in the upper country, while those of Calcutta exhibit geese and turkies. The delicacies of an entertainment consist of hermetically-sealed salmon, red-herrings, cheese, smoked sprats, raspberry jam, and dried fruits: these articles coming from Europe, and being sometimes very difficult to pro-

cure in a fresh and palmy state, are prized accordingly. Female taste has here ample room for its display ; but a woman must possess the courage of an Amazon to attempt any innovation upon ancient customs, amid such bigoted people as the Indians, Anglo and native. To abridge the number of the dishes, or to diminish the size of the joints, would infallibly be imputed to the meanest motives ; the servants would be ready to expire with shame at their master's disgrace, and the guests would complain of starvation. Ladies who have passed five-and-twenty or thirty years of their lives in Europe, comprise so small a portion of an Indian circle, that they have not the means of effecting any important reform ; the majority being merely supplied with school-experience, or from long habit or example wedded to the old regime ; while the whole of the male population, masters and servants, are ready to raise a furious outcry against modern fashions and female dictation. The receipt of a celebrated wit, for dressing a cucumber, is unconsciously followed with great precision with respect to an Indian entertainment ; for after all the pains and expense bestowed upon them, the dinners and suppers given by the Anglo-Indians are, literally as well as figuratively speaking, thrown away : not

a fiftieth part can be consumed by the guests, the climate will not admit of keeping the remainder, for in the cold season it will get dry, and in the hot weather decomposition speedily takes place, while it is only the very lowest caste of natives who will eat any thing which comes from an European table. In Calcutta, there are multitudes of poor Christians, to whom the remnants of the rich man's feast are very acceptable; but in the upper provinces, even beggars would turn away from the gift.

The gratification to be derived from these dinner-parties depends entirely upon the persons who occupy the next chairs, for they are usually much too large to admit of general conversation, nor are there many topics of general interest, excepting in circles exclusively military, in which speculations upon line steps, and the restoration of batta, form subjects for discussion which never appear to tire. Nothing that occurs in India ever creates a sensation, at least in the same degree which is experienced in Europe at an elopement, a new appearance, a successful play, or the arrival of a distinguished stranger. Rammohun Roy attracted more attention in London than Lord Wm. Bentinck, or any preceding governor-general, did in Calcutta.

Intelligence from the mother-country must be of a very stirring nature to excite the sobered feelings of an Anglo-Indian ; and in any revolution occurring at home, the length of time which must elapse before an account of the events which have taken place can reach India, renders it doubtful whether a counteraction has not produced some fresh change ; a protracted period of uncertainty destroys interest, and confirmation or contradiction meet a cold reception : numbers are wholly indifferent to foreign events, and care nothing for the destinies of kings and ministers belonging to a distant quarter of the globe. New novels and new poems, those fertile subjects of discussion at parties in England, if spoken of at all, are mentioned coldly and carelessly ; they come out to India unaccompanied by the *on dits* which heighten their interest in the land of their production ; if anonymous, none know, or care to know, the name of the author ; they do not elicit lively disquisitions upon their merits or demerits, nor are people ashamed, as in England, to confess that they have not read a popular work.

Books meet a ready sale in India, and their perusal forms the chief amusement of leisure hours ; but they are rarely made the subject of conversation. The literature of the day finds its way to India at

nearly the same time as the reviews which usher it into the world ; but whole circles do not, as in England, run mad about some new publication ; there are only a certain number of copies to be procured ; a new edition cannot be supplied upon demand, and it would be surprising indeed if enthusiasm were not subdued by so many chilling circumstances. There are no picture-galleries, no exhibitions, no opera to converse about ; the musical and dramatic entertainments, being amateur, are scarcely legitimate subjects for criticism, and the observations they elicit too frequently degenerate into personalities. In the dearth of native topics of this description, Anglo-Indians are not willing to be enlightened on affairs of the same nature at home ; and new arrivals, who fancy that they shall gain the general ear by vivid accounts of the new wonder they have left in England, are wofully disappointed. Persons who rave about Paganini, Sontag, or Taglioni, are much in the same predicament as the narrators of tiger-hunts at home ; they are voted bores, and soon discover that, unless they are prepared to fall into the opinions and prejudices of their new associates, they will sink into nobodies. At the same time, such is the perversity of human nature, that people who are un-

able to furnish accounts of *debutantes* of eminence, new pictures, new music, or new books, are subjected to very severe comments, and stigmatized immediately as springing from some obscure class in England.

A canal through the isthmus of Suez, and regular steam-communication, may effect a great change in Indian society; but until this shall take place, none save stupendous events will have power to awaken it from its lethargy. Lord Byron tells us that the cold in clime are cold in blood; and certainly the burning rays of an Indian sun are insufficient to produce those lava-floods in the veins of an European, which are the birthright of the children of the soil. The strongest excitements are necessary to arouse an Anglo-Indian into action; the sports of the field are reckoned tame and uninteresting, unless they are beset with danger and death, and hence the difficulty of satisfying those who return after long absence to England: "what," say they, "are the poor triumphs of the first of September, compared to the noble warfare which we carry on against the monsters of the wood, where the sharp roar of the tiger is followed by its deadly spring, where the steady rush of the buffalo is fraught with destruction, and the noble charge

of the wild boar demands that eye, and hand, and nerve, should be equally steady and unfailing?" Stimulants of inferior power have little influence over the mind of an Anglo-Indian, whose slumbering energies can only be called forth upon great occasions.

CHAPTER. V.

BERHAMPORE.

IN its outward aspect, there is no European station in the Mofussil which can bear any comparison with Berhampore; it is situated on the left bank of the Hooghly, in the fair and fertile province of Bengal, and is arrayed with the utmost splendour of foliage; the flowering trees attaining a gigantic size, and the more common offspring of the forest, the banian, tamarind, neem, peepul, and bamboo, occurring in greater profusion, and seeming to riot in richer luxuriance than in the dry soils of the upper country, where the groves are contrasted with arid sand, instead of springing from long grass and thickly-spreading underwood.

The cantonments of Berhampore are well laid out and handsomely built; the quarters of the officers belonging to the European regiments stationed there being of brick covered with cement, like the *puckha* palaces of Calcutta, and forming uniform ranges of considerable extent. The grand square,

a spacious quadrangle, enclosing an excellent parade-ground, is particularly striking; and stately houses, belonging to civilians and other permanent residents, arise in tasteful and convenient spots in the neighbourhood, giving to the whole station an air of grandeur and importance not usually found in garrisons, where the pompous array of fortresses and bristling bulwarks is wanting. To contrast with all this beauty and magnificence, and to shew the deceitfulness of outward appearances, a large and melancholy arena, filled with monumental stones, gives silent but mournful evidence of the unhealthiness of the atmosphere, and of the grim dominion of Death in the midst of the most lavish productions of nature. Berhampore lies low, and has not been sufficiently drained before its occupation by European troops. Every breath of air which visits it comes over swamps and marshy lands; it abounds with ditches and stagnant pools, those fruitful sources of malaria, and its too redundant vegetation is rank and noisome.

Elegant and commodious as the European quarters appear, they have not been constructed with a proper regard to the health of the inhabitants. It was formerly the custom in Bengal, and one which unfortunately has not been universally relinquished,

to glaze the houses only upon what sailors would term the weather-side; close wooden shutters, or glass doors, not being supposed necessary except to keep off the storms of rain brought by the hurricanes from the north-west. Under this idea, the more sheltered parts of the house are merely furnished with venetians, which never can be made to close so exactly as to keep out the damp air.

There are no fire-places in these summer residences; and persons compelled to dwell all the year round in them must undergo every change of atmosphere, without the possibility of preventing their exposure to diseases which are generated by sudden transitions from heat to cold. Philosophers assert that the earth is cooling down; and although the sultriness of Bengal during the hot season has not suffered the slightest diminution, it is certain that the air is much keener than heretofore during the few months of cold weather: a fact fully borne out by the frosts, which have made ice an article of manufacture at Chinsurah by the same process used in the upper provinces. Every person having more regard to health than to expense, takes care to have the family abode glazed upon all sides, and fire-places formerly unknown are becoming common in Calcutta, where, after sunset, in the large lofty

rooms, during the cold season, the blaze and genial warmth of a wood fire are very acceptable. The want of these preservatives from cholera, which is more frequently brought on by exposure to chills than by any other cause, is severely felt at Berhampore, where that fatal disease is peculiarly destructive to the European community, making sad ravages amongst the King's regiments every season: doleful records upon the tombstones chronicle its gloomy triumphs; neither sex nor age are spared, and there is no cemetery in India which contains the mortal remains of so many juvenile mothers and young brides as that at Berhampore.

The Lower Orphan School, in the neighbourhood of Calcutta, receives numerous inmates from this unhealthy station. This institution was established for the purpose of educating and providing for the children of deceased soldiers. Some of its regulations, though judicious, are rather singular. Should the non-commissioned officers or privates of European regiments desire to take a wife out of this asylum, they are, if men of character, permitted to do so, but they must choose by the eye alone at a single interview. They are not allowed to pay their addresses to the object which has attracted them, or to transfer their affections to another after

their selection has been made : no previous acquaintance can be granted, and the bride has only the privilege of rejection.

King's troops, which have nearly completed the full period of their services in India, generally take their leave of Mofussil stations at Berham-pore ; but it is too often selected for the quarters of new arrivals ; and regiments, acclimating in the midst of its treacherous swamps, pay double toll to the king of terrors. Here are no pecuniary advantages which can compensate for an unhealthy climate, and no one takes up his abode at this place without a feeling of reluctance ; frequent deaths cast a gloom upon society, and there are other causes which prevent the cordiality and good-fellowship amid the European community, which can alone reconcile the Indian exile to banishment in a foreign land.

The extreme youth of the civil and military servants of the Company, upon their arrival in the country in which their lot has been cast, permits them to conform to its customs without any irksome feeling ; but it is otherwise with officers of King's regiments, who come out later in life. Their habits and manners have been formed in England, and many refuse to submit to the regulations and usages which have been established time out of mind in

India, while others comply with an ill-grace. The order of visiting is completely reversed in the Company's territories; the stranger is expected to call upon the residents, and the rule is so absolute, that persons who refuse to attend to it give much offence, and are in a great measure cut off from society. Subaltern officers of small means, unaccustomed to the state of things existing in a strange country, feel reluctant to intrude themselves upon the mansions of rich civilians, and would rather await the advance of the great man; the civilian is offended by the neglect of common courtesy, and, having lived many years out of England, forgets to make proper allowances for the prejudices imbibed at home: coldness and dislike ensue, each casts the blame upon the other, and the station is divided into separate circles.

The difference between the style of living and the incomes of persons thrown together at a Mofussil station is but too apt to create suspicion, if not jealousy; on the part of the least wealthy class. They scrutinize the air and deportment of those more favoured with the gifts of fortune with a critical eye; reserve is always attributed to pride; they expect marked and flattering receptions, without considering that their visits may be paid to men

who, notwithstanding their station or their talents, may be very little acquainted with the world, and quite unskilled in the art of doing the honours of their houses. The shyness and want of ease which would pass unnoticed in persons of their own standing, are imputed to the worst feelings when exhibited by rich civilians: no time is given to thaw the ice; a hasty judgment, in many instances of course exceedingly erroneous, is formed, and the visitor withdraws in disgust, determined never to subject himself again to "the proud man's contumely."

Ladies, happily, are not expected to undergo this ordeal: upon their arrival at a station, the husband, father, or brother, with whom they reside, makes the tour of the place, and the females of the families, to whom he has paid his respects, call upon the strangers, who are of course expected to return the visit. If the duty, in the first instance, on the part of the gentleman, be omitted, the ladies will remain unnoticed, and it will either be supposed that they desire to live in seclusion, or that there is some not very creditable reason for their being averse to an introduction to the society. The awkwardness of presenting themselves at the houses of persons with whom they have not had

any previous acquaintance is considerably lessened when, as is generally the case, the strangers have some friend, well known to the whole station, to accompany them in their round of visits.

It rarely happens that the officers of the native army are without a *Cicerone*; for, immediately upon landing, they are thrown into the way of so many cadets, new-comers like themselves, who, upon their obtaining commissions, are posted into different regiments; and so soon become associated with persons belonging to both services, that, at almost every station, they must have an acquaintance disposed to perform the friendly office. King's troops are differently circumstanced; they have a society within themselves, which they fancy will render them independent of any other. They do not choose to appear to court attentions which they think should be bestowed unsolicited; and if, upon their first arrival in Bengal, they should not be quartered for any length of time at Fort William, they may march up the country without having formed any acquaintance beyond the limits of their own barracks. Officers joining King's regiments long stationed in India generally live for a considerable period isolated from the servants of the Company, unless the corps should have amalgamated

itself with the rest of the Anglo-Indian community, and have got rid of all the opinions contracted in Europe. This is only the case at Berhampore, when its garrison has been recruited from the upper provinces.

A newly-arrived regiment, which had held out staunchly against paying the first visit, and whose officers could not be persuaded that pride was not the cause of their being unnoticed by civilians of rank, was not a little astonished by the conduct pursued by a gentleman, who succeeded to the appointment of resident at the neighbouring court. The individual in question, from long domestication with native princes in distant states, had adopted the pomp and circumstance of oriental splendour, so necessary to create and retain the respect due to the representative of the governors of the country. The appointments of his establishment were magnificent; he kept a train of elephants, and when he appeared in state was surrounded by a crowd of retainers, *chobdars* and *chuprassoes*, carrying silver maces and sheathed swords before him, while mounted *suwars* brought up the rear. These things were talked of, and of course exaggerated, in a place which has been too long under the dominion of the Company for

Europeans to be compelled to study the tastes and prejudices of natives of rank, whom it seems to be the policy to instruct in foreign fashions. A demeanour correspondent to all this outward grandeur was expected by the little world of Berhampore; but, to the surprise of every body, the new resident got into his buggy, that favourite conveyance of rich and poor, and left his name at every door without the least distinction. He became of course exceedingly popular, and rational people perceived that, if they had attended like him to the customs of the country, the whole station might have been united, instead of being split into parties.

To a casual visitor, neither the crowded burial-ground, nor the little jealousies existing between certain classes, can seriously affect the pleasure to be derived from a short sojourn at one of the best-built and best-kept stations in India. The roads are exceedingly fine, and there are no squalid and unsightly objects to destroy the effect of the splendid buildings scattered in every direction. The whole place would realize the *beau idéal* which untravelled persons might form of some imperial residence, exclusively confined to the *attachés* of a court in its rural retirement; and when the band of one of the King's regiments is playing the over-

tures of Rossini or of Weber, in a masterly style, at the evening promenade, surrounded by gay equipages filled with ladies attired in the latest European fashions, it is difficult to imagine that the scene is placed upon the banks of the Hooghly, so many thousand miles distant from the native places of the music, the glittering paraphernalia, and the assembled crowd. The divine airs of our favourite composers can scarcely be heard to more advantage than when played by accomplished performers, on a fine calm evening, by the side of an Indian river. None, who have ever listened to the strains of harmony waked by skilful hands, while gazing upon the placid waters paved with starry ingots, or silvered over by the moonlight, and shaded with feathery trees, can forget the soothing sensation they produced. The pleasure is too rarely tasted to lose its zest; European bands do not long retain their best performers in India; they have many temptations to indulge in habits of intemperance, and when they drop off, very inferior substitutes must be accepted in their place.

The East-India Company have a manufactory of silk at Berhampore, which furnishes the bandana handkerchiefs so much prized in England, together with taffetas and washing silks, which are

however deficient both in gloss and substance, and very inferior to the productions of other looms, either belonging to the eastern world or to European states; the difference in the price between these articles and richer importations, is not sufficiently great to induce Anglo-Indian ladies to patronize them, even if the prejudice did not run very strongly in favour of foreign goods.

Where China satins are despised, the silks of Berhampore have little favour, and seldom find their way into the wardrobes of the fair residents. Beautiful pieces of workmanship, of various kinds, in carved ivory, are brought for sale from the neighbouring city of Moorshedabad. Though the artisans of the native capital of the province of Bengal cannot support any comparison with the delicate performances of the Chinese, they exhibit considerable skill in the delineations of men and animals, and their figures far surpass the grotesque images which are usually sold in Delhi. The common kinds of chessmen, boards furnished with richly-cut pegs for the game of *solitaire*, paper-presses, and wafer-seals, are exceedingly well executed, and cheap compared with the European prices. It is seldom that there is a large stock upon hand, the manufacturers not liking to work

except by order ; nor are these articles purchasable at Calcutta. The natives of India, though industrious and fond of getting money, are not given to commercial speculations ; at least, the spirit does not pervade all classes of merchants and manufacturers ; and those articles which are not in common demand all over India, are only to be found in the places where they are produced. There is no general mart in Calcutta, where all the different commodities of Hindostan can be procured.

Without visiting every part of India, it is impossible to become acquainted with the numerous branches of art which have arrived at a high degree of perfection in remote native cities ; many persons have remained for years in Calcutta without having had an opportunity of seeing articles of manufacture, which are better known in England than within a hundred miles of the spot where they were made. No European shopkeeper at the presidency has yet thought it worth his while to inquire about the productions of the Mofussil, with a view of opening a warehouse for their sale. The success of the Chinese shop on the esplanade offers great encouragement for the establishment of a similar emporium, where persons desirous to send presents to England might see all the resources

of the country at once, and choose from the gold ornaments and embroideries of Delhi, the mosaics, marbles, and agates of Agra, the sweetmeats and pickles of Lucknow, the medicinal oils of Mhow and other celebrated places, the carpets of Mirzapore, the muslin scarfs of Dacca, the ivory works of Berhampore, defensive and offensive arms, with a great variety of other articles, both curious and ornamental, which are scarcely known except by the few who may meet them by accident, in travelling through the places where they are made.

Within seventy miles of Berhampore, and not more than fifty from Calcutta, at Kisnagur, a civil station on the banks of the Jellinghy, there is a manufactory of printed muslins, of a very superior kind, which are not to be met with in the Calcutta market, even when the supply from England is not adequate to the demand. These muslins have the commendation—a strong one to some persons—of being high-priced. The piece, which is more than enough for one dress but not sufficient for two, is twenty rupees (£2). The patterns are elegant, but are only printed in a single colour; and as India muslin, though nearly driven out of the market by steam and spinning-jennies, is still highly-prized, it might be advantageous to an

English shopkeeper to keep a stock on hand for the benefit of the ladies of Calcutta.

At the same place, Kisnagur, poor native workmen have become exceedingly expert in an art, which appears to be of very modern date in India, that of modelling figures illustrative of the great variety of castes and classes of the population of Hindostan. Nothing can be more characteristic, or more skilfully executed, than the countenances; the expression of each is admirable; the water-carrier looks worn with fatigue, while the khansamah bears an air of authority; the lines of care and thought are traced upon the brow of age, and the young seem to exult in strength and vigour. There is the stern determination of the self-torturing *fugeer*, and the humble insinuating appeal of the common beggar. The attitudes have great merit; but the limbs, though well put together, are not so exactly proportioned as to correspond with the extraordinary degree of perfection to which the heads have been brought, the hands in particular being usually too large. The figures are, in the first instance, composed of rags and straw, covered with a coating of cement: from their weight and appearance, they convey the idea of images formed of finely-tempered clay; but as they are easily frac-

tured, a slight accident will reveal the nature of the materials. These figures, which cannot be copied in England, except at a great expense (it being necessary to take casts from the originals,) are sold at Kisnagur and Calcutta, where they are also manufactured, at eight annas (a shilling) each, dressed with great accuracy in the proper costume, but in coarse materials. Any number may be procured, and it is only necessary to tell the artist that you require representations of nautch girls, musicians, tailors, or fifty others; they are all brought, and all equally true to nature.

The amusements of Berhampore are considerably increased by its proximity to Moorshedabad, a city which, after the desertion of Dacca by the imperial soubadar, became the capital of Bengal, and which is still the residence of the pensioned descendant of its former rulers. The dominion which Jaffeer Khan, the founder of the family of the nawáb of Bengal, maintained against the will of the Moghul emperors, who vainly attempted to supersede him, faded away after the famous defeat at Plassey : not a single vestige of power now remains, and the princes of the present day are content to support an outward show of magnificence upon an income of sixteen lacs (£160,000) a-year, allowed

them by the East-India Company. The city is well-situated, and forms a pleasing object from the river, but contains nothing worthy of notice, except the modern palace of the nawáb, which is a fine building, in the European style, of dazzling whiteness, and rising in glittering splendour amid stately groves of flowering trees. All the Moham-medan festivals are celebrated with great pomp, under the superintendence of a prince who has little else to divert his mind; and as the invitations are very generally extended to the European residents of Berhampore, they have ample opportunities of studying the character of native entertainments. Deference to European taste has occasioned those at Moorshedabad to be of a mixed character; the nautch is frequently performing in one apartment while quadrilles are going on in another, and the style of the banquet is entirely adapted to the peculiar notions of the guests.

The intercourse which has taken place between the nawáb of Bengal and his Anglo-Indian neighbours, has not, up to the present period, been productive of the same salutary effects, which in so many instances have followed the intimacies of European and Indian residents in Calcutta. Though not destitute of talents, and apparently exceedingly

willing to accommodate themselves to foreign customs, to live in European houses, and to drive about in European carriages, none of the descendants of the dethroned Meer Jaffeer Khan have been distinguished for literary or scientific attainments, and the late nawáb* was lamentably deficient in every branch of education. It is, unfortunately, the policy of the relatives of natives of rank to enervate the mind of the heir of the family by frivolous and ignoble pursuits; this system, in the instance above mentioned, was carried to a fatal extent. The young prince was handsome, graceful in his person, and courteous in his manners; he never neglected to bow to European ladies when he met them in the evening drive, whether he had been previously presented to them or not, paying that mark of respect indiscriminately to every carriage which contained a fair tenant.† It was impossible, however, for Europeans, who had any respect for themselves, to take the slightest pleasure in the

* The *Asiatic Journal* has lately announced the death of this prince, who fell an early victim to a career of vice and intemperance.

† European ladies sometimes complain that they are not treated with sufficient deference and respect by Asiatics of rank.

society of a man wholly given up to dissipation of every kind. The interchange of visits was rendered imperative by his rank and situation ; but his presence never could be productive of gratification. When partaking of the hospitalities of the judges of the court of circuit, or other distinguished Europeans, at whose tables he did not sit as a mere matter of form, according to the strict rules practised by persons of his religion in India, he speedily became intoxicated by too frequent libations of that beverage, in which lax Mohammedans permit themselves to indulge, since it does not come under the denomination of wine. Cherry-brandy is the favourite juice of the jovial portion of Moslems and Hindoos ; even the lofty-minded Rajpoots, the strictest followers of Brahma, who in their central provinces have not been so strongly exposed to the contaminating influence of European example, will condescend to imbibe long potations of this fascinating *liqueur*, and under its influence become, in an exceedingly short space of time, as they term it, *burra coosee* (very happy).

Upon some occasions, the Nawáb of Bengal appears upon the river in state, and the effect of his numerous and brilliant flotilla is the finest imaginable. The prows of these gay and gilded barges

are shaped into the resemblance of animals, and painted and varnished with all the hues and splendour of enamel; at the stern, gilt pillars support richly-embroidered canopies, and the rowers are splendidly clad in white and scarlet. The boats are exceedingly long, and as they skim like bright-plumed birds the surface of the sparkling water, the delighted spectator feels assured that the silver Cydnus never bore a fairer fleet. The great men who follow in the nawáb's train, are magnificently clad in gold and silver brocade, studded with jewels; the punkahs and umbrellas, which are used to agitate the air and screen them from the sun when landing, are formed of rich materials, and there is not, as in other native processions, any mixture of poverty or meanness to mar the gorgeousness of the spectacle.

These regattas are seen to the greatest advantage in the rains, when the Bhagarathi—the name given to the arm of the Ganges, which branches off from the parent river, about forty miles above Moorshe-dabad,—is very wide, spreading itself over a vast extent of low ground, and forming beautiful creeks and bays shadowed with the bending branches of the bamboo and other graceful trees. Nor is it by day alone that the river is made the scene of those

pageants, which in India supply the place of dramatic spectacles. An annual *fête* takes place at night, under the auspices of the nawáb, which is scarcely to be paralleled in beauty. It is instituted in honour of the escape of an ancient sovereign of Bengal from drowning, who, as the tradition relates, being upset in a boat at night, would have perished, his attendants being unable to distinguish the spot where he struggled in the water, had it not been for a sudden illumination caused by a troop of beauteous maidens, who had simultaneously launched a great number of little boats into the river, of coco-nut garlanded with flowers, and gleaming with a lamp, whose flickering flame each viewed with anxious hopes of happy augury. The faithful followers of the king, aided by this seasonable diffusion of light, perceived their master just as he was nearly sinking, exhausted by vain efforts to reach the shore, and guiding a boat to his assistance, arrived in time to snatch him from a watery grave. It is said that it is in commemoration of this fortunate escape that the annual festival of the *Bhearer* is celebrated; some, however, attribute its origin to a different circumstance: whatever may have been the motive of its institution, they are fortunate who have had an

opportunity of witnessing a scene which transports the spectator to fairy land.

The natives of India are extremely ingenious in all the decorative parts of art, and frequently astonish those who consider their taste as perfectly barbarous by the display of undoubted elegance in their devices. Talc, which is found in great abundance in India, supplies the material for numberless brilliant illusions : the splendid *táxees*, carried about at the Mohurram, are chiefly composed of the shining and transparent plates of this mineral, which may be cut into any shape, and made to assume all the colours of the rainbow. When illuminated by the profusion of lamps which are always brought in aid of any midnight exhibition, the effect is perfectly magical.

The banks of the river are brilliantly lighted up on the evening of the festival of the *Bhearer*, and numerous flights of rockets announce the approach of a floating palace, built upon a raft, and preceded by thousands of small lamps, which cover the surface of the water, each wreathed with a chaplet of flowers. The raft is of considerable extent, formed of plantain trees fastened together, and bearing a structure which Titania herself might delight to inhabit. Towers, gates, and

pagodas, appear in fantastic array, bright with a thousand colours, and shining in the light of numberless glittering cressets.

Two angles in the river only admit a transient view of the passing pageant; there is no time to detect the human hand in its erection, or to doubt that fairy spells have been at work: amid the blaze of rockets, which reveal nothing but its beauties, the clang of innumerable instruments, and the animated shouts of thousands raised to the highest degree of excitement by the interest of the scene, the splendid fabric disappears, and the river is left to its own placid beauty, the sky to its lonely stars, and the atmosphere around to those splendid meteors which brighten the evening air in Bengal. The fire-fly is rarely to be seen above Benares, where it does not appear in the countless myriads disporting through the fields of heaven, but in the lower and more marshy provinces, it becomes one of the most beautiful adjuncts of an Indian night; and is seen in great abundance in the neighbourhood of Moorshedabad, where the trees are literally radiant with lamps on every leaf.

It may be supposed that when the festival of the *Bhearer* is celebrated with so much pomp, the custom to which (whatever may be its origin) it

bears so strong an affinity, is very prevalent. Though occasionally on the Jumna, and on the higher parts of the Ganges, the fairy boat, with its garland and its light of good or evil omen, is to be seen, the stream is not lit up, as in Bengal, with numerous barks of hope, which float after each other of an evening in rapid succession, nor is the native attachment to flowers, though extending to every part of Hindostan, so strongly displayed in any other province.

In addition to the gaieties and festivities which take place at the palace of the nawáb, the residents of Berhampore avail themselves of the opportunities of enjoying field sports, afforded by the adjacent country. The Rajmhal hills arise on the opposite bank of the river, and thither parties of gentlemen are continually attracted by the exciting warfare which Anglo-Indians delight to carry on against the beasts of prey infesting the jungles of India. Numerous wild animals, of the most savage description, abound in the sunny dells and shady thickets of the extensive mountain ranges, which divide Bengal from the neighbouring province of Behar.

The rhinoceros is an inhabitant of the woods of Rajmhal, and though of too sullen and cruel a

character to become domesticated or useful to man, when taken young may be permitted nearly the same liberty of action as that with which the elephant in the Zoological Gardens is indulged. An enclosure of not very large dimensions, but in which there is a spreading umbrageous tree, and a small muddy pond, in Barrackpore Park, contains one of these huge unwieldy animals. The creature is apparently well-satisfied with its condition, wallowing for half the day in the mire, and spending the remainder under the sheltering boughs of its leafy canopy. It does not display any anger or impatience at the approach of visitors, and gazes unconcernedly at the carriages which are continually passing and re-passing the place of its confinement, which, for the convenience of those who may wish to see it without much trouble, is close to the public road. This extraordinary animal is rarely seen in Europe; a young one, captured a few years ago, which was intended for an English menagerie, unfortunately perished in consequence of the miscalculations of the natives to whom it was entrusted. As they learned that there would be some difficulty in procuring proper food for their four-footed companion, in one stage of their journey to Calcutta, they crammed it with three

days' provision at once, and it died of repletion, a contingency which never occurred to men who can endure the extremes of abstinence or of excess without sustaining much personal inconvenience.

Those huge ferocious bears, which form such conspicuous inhabitants of European menageries, and which in their native haunts are not less formidable than the tiger, stalk in horrid majesty through the woods of Rajmhal: one of the tribe was formerly to be found in the collection at Barrackpore Park, which contained specimens of the most interesting animals in India; but the present Government, too economical in its arrangements to sanction an expense of five hundred rupees per month, the cost of the establishment, gave away birds and beasts without remorse, and though not at the trouble of taking down the buildings, which are tasteful and well-constructed, has permitted them to fall into decay. The niggard parsimony pursued in this instance must always be a subject of regret to those who are interested in the study of natural history. Had the menagerie been kept up a few years longer, there can be little doubt that, besides the gratification which it afforded to visitors from the presidency and the neighbouring

cantonments, it would have become an emporium for the supply of England, since it would have been always easy to fill up the places of those animals which should be sent to zoological societies at home. There would have been no kind of difficulty in procuring the most rare inhabitants of the peninsula of India, since, had any desire been manifested on the part of the government to render the menagerie complete in all its departments, every civilian in the service would have been happy to take advantage of the opportunities afforded by his situation, and the ready aid given by the natives to any thing which the judge or collector may choose to undertake, to furnish the collection with such wild animals as were known to exist within the limits of his jurisdiction.

Very rare and beautiful animals may frequently be purchased in India at reasonable prices. A pair of the small Nipal cattle, the Yak, which furnish those long silky tails, so distinguished an ornament of every native court, and which when converted into *chowries* are always thought worthy of being affixed to handles of solid silver, were offered for sale by the proprietor for three hundred rupees. The tails form an article of commerce in great demand, but the animals which supply them are sel-

dom seen upon the plains of India, as they will not live through the heats of the sultry months. The introduction of the breed in England, therefore, would not be difficult, and as an ornamental appendage to a nobleman's park, they would be invaluable. Not one amid the numerous varieties belonging to their species can compare in outward beauty to those lovely little animals; they are exceedingly well-shaped, and their coats, jet black, and shining like satin, are contrasted with a pure white bushy tail, long, soft, and wavy. The pair above-mentioned were carried to Gwalior, the officer to whom they were offered being deterred from making the purchase, on account of the difficulty, in the existing state of things, of having them properly taken care of in Calcutta, or of making arrangements for their being shipped for England. The heat of the voyage would in all probability have been fatal to these animals, which could only be conveyed in safety by way of the Red Sea, and through the Mediterranean.

The sunny regions of Rajmhal are particularly favourable to the growth of snakes; all the venomous kinds thrive in a congenial soil, and the boa-constrictor attains a size unknown in other parts of the continent of India.

It has been already remarked, that a very sensible change has been experienced in the four months of cold weather, which affords so seasonable a relief to the overpowering heat of Bengal ; and as by experiments, made at Chinsurah, it is now supposed that ice may be obtained by the method employed in the upper country, those who are of opinion that an expensive freezing apparatus is necessary for the manufacture, may feel desirous to learn the common mode in use all over India.

At the principal stations in the Mofussil, there are regular ice-harvests ; the night-frosts during a certain number of weeks being always sufficiently strong to congeal water exposed to their influence, if of an inconsiderable depth. A piece of ground, commensurate to the number of persons who subscribe to the concern, is laid out for the purpose of collecting a sufficient quantity of ice to last through the hot season ; shallow pans are provided, of convenient dimensions, and these are placed in rows, close to each other. After sunset, they are filled with water by superintendants, whose business it is to remove the cakes when sufficiently frozen, and to replenish the pans ; an operation which is performed several times in the course of each night. The cakes of ice are deposited in excavations made

according to the principles observed in England, and with proper care may be preserved during the rains. The least neglect, however, is fatal in the damp season ; the ice melts in an instant, and the unfortunate subscribers, instead of having the stipulated quantity to cool butter, cream, jellies, water, and wine, are compelled to do as well as they can with the only substitute, saltpetre.

Artificial ice, made by the assistance of an air-pump and other machinery, has been found too expensive, and is seldom or never resorted to in India : upon its first introduction into Bengal, the novelty proved very attractive, and a rich and luxurious native, it is said, expended seven hundred pounds in the single article of ice at an entertainment given to a European party.

At Chinsurah, where the frosts are not so severe as in the upper country, a small quantity of saltpetre is placed in the pans, and should the season prove favourable, the necessity of importing ice from America will exist no longer.

CHAPTER VI.

TRAVELLING:—THE MARCH.

IN peaceable times, the period chosen for the general movement of troops in India is at the commencement of the cold season ; but as many regiments are obliged to wait until they are relieved by others, the hot weather often comes on before the whole of the army on the move can be settled in new quarters. Officers rejoining their corps, or proceeding to different parts of the country upon leave of absence or military duties, are continually traversing the plains and jungles of India, even at the least favourable seasons, having no habitations save a tent ; and if travelling alone, no society excepting that of their own servants and the wild tenants of the wood. Persons, however, who can amuse themselves, prefer the solitude to which they must be condemned in their progress from station to station, to the inconveniences attendant upon the movement of large bodies, and the necessity of a strict observance of the rules and regulations laid down by the commanding officer.

Unless under some very peculiar circumstances, a regiment is usually stationary for three years in the quarters assigned to it; the breaking-up of an establishment, therefore, after so long a residence, is often a serious affair. In many places, bungalows are not to be obtained on hire; they must be purchased from the proprietors, and upon a change of residence sold to the new comers. If there should not be a sufficient number to accommodate the whole of the strangers, those who have not succeeded in procuring a house must build one, and live in their tents until it shall be finished. Great losses are frequently sustained in the fluctuations of society in a small station. An officer who has been compelled to pay a very high price for a bungalow, when houses happen to have been in great demand, may be obliged to sell at a very low one, or have the tenement left upon his hands at his departure, in consequence of a diminution in the number of the residents.

In places where natives are induced to build bungalows upon speculation, and to let them out by the month (the usual period for the hire of every thing in India), there is much less trouble and anxiety in changing the place of abode, though it is still a formidable affair. All the accumulations

of furniture not actually necessary for the march are sold off, sometimes as a matter of pure necessity, to procure funds to meet the expenses of a removal, or to lessen them by abridging the number of conveyances. At others, the sales, so frequent all over India, seem to be occasioned by a peculiarity of disposition common to the British community resident there,—a passion for buying and selling,—since, in merely changing house, or removing to a very short distance, many persons will take the opportunity of having an auction, and of parting with all their goods and chattels without reserve, although they must commence a repurchase almost immediately.

The roving Arab of the desert cannot entertain less attachment to household conveniences than an Anglo-Indian, and if one person should happen to take a fancy to the effects of another, he may be very certain that a little patience will afford him the option of bidding for them at the *oucry*,* which will assuredly take place in the course of a few

* This is an Anglo-Indian word, which is preferred to the common appellation. To go to an 'outcry,' or to send goods to an 'outcry,' is understood by the initiated to mean an 'auction;' and *Griffins*, who do not comprehend the term, are looked upon with great contempt.

months. There are a few exceptions, chiefly in the cases of ancient civilians, who allow their chairs and tables to grow old in their service; but the mania appears to be extending, and when these worthies shall have retired from the scene, their successors will doubtless follow the prevailing fashion, and sell off at every decent opportunity.

One cause of the shifting nature which property has assumed in India proceeds from the difficulty of preserving any perishable article from the injurious effects of the climate, and the depredations committed by winged and four-footed assailants. Constant care and attention are required to keep furniture in decent order. No packing will secure iron from rust, wood from ants, or cotton, canvas, and leather from rats: tents laid up in ordinary are eaten through and through; boxes and trunks drop to pieces, and are found to be nests of reptiles of every kind; one article has been split in the hot winds, another has got mouldy in the rains, and insects have penetrated every where. If the furniture and other effects belonging to a family going to the hills, or to the presidency for a few months, should be left standing in a house, there is still danger from the habitual neglect, or occasional remissness of the servants who may have the care of

them : indeed, constant use seems to be almost essential to their preservation. The house itself, also, if uninhabited, will speedily fall into disrepair, and therefore, even where a short absence is contemplated, it is thought more advisable to sell every thing off, than to risk the destruction of property from the numerous adverse influences in continual and active operation.

Accustomed to constant sales and transfers of worldly goods, many persons will part with all their household effects without any adequate cause, not even retaining their plate, which they must sell at a disadvantage, and which may not be in sufficient quantities to be any serious encumbrance ; but where there are few modes of beguiling time, a sale affords a degree of excitement, and though the amusements of an auction-room are monopolized by the gentlemen, it not being reckoned decorous for females to attend, the ladies are interested in the affair, and look over the marked catalogues brought to them with eager eyes, speculating upon the causes of suspicious purchases, a piano-forte, for instance, by some apparently determined bachelor, which perhaps turns out to be a commission from a married friend, or expensive articles by families who can ill afford the luxuries of life.

An auction is the inevitable result of a death. A wife losing her husband, breaks up her establishment immediately ; a husband, losing his wife sells off all the superfluous furniture, and not unfrequently the ornaments and wardrobe of the deceased ; while the executors of a bachelor, either appointed by will or by the existing regulations, collect every article of his property and put the whole under the hammer. The eve of a march is fertile in sales, the purchasers being the more permanent residents, shop-keepers and not unfrequently natives, who take the opportunity of procuring articles of European manufacture at a cheap rate : they are beginning, even in the Upper Provinces, to keep English carriages, and are if possible less particular than the Anglo-Indians respecting the external appearance of the equipage, being quite content with rat-eaten, worm-eaten vehicles, which have had the greater part of the paint and varnish rubbed off in rude encounters with enemies of various kinds.

Upon a march, a certain quantity of furniture must be reserved from the general sale, or purchased for the occasion, since it is not possible to proceed without a supply of domestic utensils sufficient for the comfort and convenience of the travelling party. Many persons pitch their tents, and

live in them for a week or two, previous to their final retreat from their old quarters; thus accustoming themselves to the change, and seeing that they have every thing requisite for a long journey. At day-break, on the morning appointed for the commencement of the march, the bustle and confusion of departure begin; the *cortège* of every family spreads itself wide over the plain, presenting motley groupes of various kinds.

Chests and other heavy goods are packed in *hackerys* (small carts drawn by bullocks), and where there are ladies, a conveyance of this nature is secured for the female attendants: other bullocks have trunks, made purposely for this mode of transportation, slung across their backs; the tents become the load of camels, or an elephant, and light or fragile articles are carried either on men's heads or over their shoulders: nothing that will not bear jolting being entrusted to four-footed animals. The china and glass are packed in round baskets, and conveyed by *coolies* on their heads; looking-glasses, *chillum-chees* (brass wash-basins), and toilette-furniture, are tied upon a *charpoy* or bedstead, and carried by four men, and cooking-pots, gridirons, frying-pans, chairs, tables, stools, and bird-cages, are disposed of in a similar manner. The *meter*

appears with his dogs in a string or strings ; the shepherd drives his sheep before him, and cocks crow and hens cluck from the baskets in which they are imprisoned ; spare horses are led by their *syces* or grooms, who never mount them, and the washermen and the water-carriers are there with their bullocks. The head-servant, or *khansamah*, seldom compromises his dignity by marching on foot, but is generally to be seen amid the equestrians, the steed being some ragged, vicious, or broken-down *tattoo*, caprisoned *à la Roxinante* : the other domestics, *khidmutghars*, bearers, &c. either walk, or bestride the camels, if their drivers will permit them to mount, or take a cast in a hackery, or get on in any way that happens to present itself. All are well accustomed to the mode of travelling, and proceed with cheerfulness.

The master of the family, if with his regiment, must be on horseback, unless the commandant should be sufficiently indulgent to permit him to drive his wife in a buggy. The lady sometimes rides an Arab steed, and sometimes travels in a close carriage, or a palanquin, according as inclination or convenience may direct ; the children, if there be any, are usually inclosed with their attendants in a peculiar kind of vehicle, called a palan-

quin-carriage, but different from those used by adults, and not very unlike the cage of a wild beast placed upon wheels. The nurse sits on the floor of this machine, with a baby upon her knees, and the larger fry peep through the prison-bars of the clumsy conveyance, which is drawn by bullocks, and moves slowly and heavily along, floundering over the rough roads, and threatening to upset at every jolt. The passage of such a cavalcade through the country is very amusing, but *griffins* only are seen to laugh at the droll appearance made by this gipsy mode of travelling; the natives are accustomed to it, and the immense multitude (the regiment itself scarcely forming a third part) move along without molestation, and with comparatively little difficulty, in consequence of the few enclosures which impede their progress.

The train of a family, amounting to three persons, will not consist of less than a hundred individuals, the wives and children of the servants included, who not unfrequently carry their aged parents along with them. The native officers belonging to sepoy regiments have their zenanas to convey, and few of the sepoys themselves are entirely destitute of attendants. Then there is the bazaar, which is invariably attached to a camp, to

supply it with all the necessaries of life, and men, women, children, and animals abound in this ambulatory market for gram, ghee, flour, tobacco, spices, &c. When spare tents have been sent on, the family of an officer, on arriving at the encamping ground, find every thing ready for their reception ; but if any accident should have retarded the route of the people, a tree must be the resource. Parties may be seen on horseback, or on foot, or in palanquins, grouped under the shade of some friendly bough, waiting while their canvas abode is preparing for them.

The rapid manner in which the multifarious materials which are to compose the temporary city are reduced to order, and arranged in their proper places, is truly astonishing. It is both curious and interesting to watch the progress of the formation of a camp, from some neighbouring bungalow, when it occurs in the vicinity of cantonments. The desert appears to be peopled as if by magic ; men and animals crowd upon the scene ; the earth in every direction is strewn with uncouth packages and bundles ; these amid much gesticulation, and no small expenditure of lungs, assume graceful forms, and arise glittering in the sun like the pavilions of some fairy princess. Long lines of pent-

house streets appear ; banners are floating in the air ; the elephant, who has trodden out the ground and smoothed it for his master's tent, retires to his bivouac, and spacious enclosures, formed of *kanauts*, secure the utmost privacy to the dwellers of the populous camp. The exertions of a little army of followers have succeeded in imparting comfort and even elegance to interiors fitted up in haste in the midst of the wildest jungle. Palanquins and carriages begin to arrive ; the ladies find their toilette-tables laid out ; the gentlemen are provided with a bath ; the *khidmutghars* are preparing breakfast, and the *hookahbadars* are getting the *chillums* in readiness ; while camels, bullocks and their drivers, tent-pitchers, coolies, and all those who have been employed in fatiguing offices, are buried in profound repose. The sheep are lying down to rest, and the poultry are more peaceable than usual.

It is at these times that a kind master is rewarded for his attention to the comfort and well-being of those beneath him, by the devotion manifested by his servants. It seems to be a point of honour amongst faithful and respectable domestics to prevent their employers from suffering inconvenience or privation of any kind, while exposed to the dif-

difficulties which must necessarily occur upon a line of march. They will, upon such occasions, voluntarily perform duties not properly belonging to their respective stations in the household. They will assist with heart and hand upon any emergency ; help to get the tent up, or to extricate the cattle and the baggage, should either stick fast upon the road ; cheer and animate the exertions of others, and think their own credit is concerned in procuring all the wonted enjoyments of a permanent home.

Where the head of the house has failed to secure the attachment of his dependants, he is made to feel how completely it is in their power to avenge themselves. They can always invent some excuse for the carelessness and neglect which are productive of serious annoyance to him. He has no remedy ; for, accustomed to beating and abuse, they are not deterred, by fear of the consequences of his displeasure, from preferring their own ease to his comfort. They have little hope of good treatment, and are determined not to allow any opportunity for retaliation to escape them. He may awake in the morning and find that the whole set have abandoned him in the night, and in this event he is left in the most charming predicament imaginable, and

can only vent his rage upon the awkward substitutes which the neighbouring village will supply, who, in turn, run away so soon as they can take their departure without danger of pursuit.

In parts of the country abounding in game, the sportsmen are scarcely settled in their quarters before they prepare to take the field. Their horses have been sent on over-night, and as the grand objects of the chase, the wild boar and the tiger, are not hunted with dogs, they have only themselves and their cattle to put in order. Tigers can rarely be approached except upon an elephant; for, independent of the danger to the rider, few horses could be induced to face these terrific animals. But well-mounted, and with spear in hand, a bold equestrian dashes forward on the scarcely less perilous pursuit of the bristly monsters of the plain.

The dresses of the hunting party are various and characteristic; many old sportsmen array themselves in long flannel jackets, descending nearly to the saddle; they render their passage through jungles, overgrown by the prickly pear, easy, by encasing their knees in thick leathern caps, and they preserve their heads from too close a contact with mother-earth, (a hard parent in a conker soil,)

by fastening a black or rather brown velvet jockey-cap; duly fenced with armour of proof in the inside, under their chins. Younger and gayer Nimrods appear in smart hunting-coats of scarlet or Lincoln green, with fashionable corded inexpressibles and top-boots; while tyros, eager for their first field, and unprovided with appropriate garments, exhibit in their accustomed suit, white jackets and trousers, exceedingly ill adapted for the fell encounters which await them. Altogether, when thus equipped, the party, attended by the numerous followers which a hunting match is sure to attract, make a gallant shew, and set forward high in hope and in spirits.

The return, though less splendid as regards the personal appearance and the habiliments of the cavalcade, is more imposing from the blood-stained trophies of the chase, brought in by an exulting band, who fight the battle o'er and o'er again. Some of the party are covered from head to foot with the mud of a marsh, in which they have been unceremoniously deposited; another re-enters the camp upon a tattoo, having left his best charger a victim to the murderous tusks of a desperate assailant; one has descended to the depths of an old well, and his chum has unwittingly explored the

secret recesses of some ravine, treacherously concealed by brushwood and long grass. But where no more serious accidents have occurred to mar the triumphs of the day, the quarters of the slain, cooked to perfection by some liberal Moosulman,* are enjoyed without alloy at the tables of the camp; the ladies partaking in the excitement of the morning's sport, and the luxurious fare it has produced.

In well-regulated camps, the utmost quiet is maintained throughout the night, until the sound of the bugles long before day authorizes the striking of the tent-pins. Sleep is effectually banished by that dreadful note of preparation, and, starting from their slumbers, the European inhabitants make a hasty toilette, and superintend the irksome task of repacking those small and valuable articles essential to their comfort, which they are afraid of entrusting to other hands.

The necessity of rising every day at a certain hour, and of performing certain duties, whether the health and spirits be equal to them or not, is a great drawback to the pleasures of a march, to those who are not strong enough to cope with

* They are bigots and pretenders solely, who object to handle the flesh of the hog in any state, cured or fresh. An orthodox believer has only to wash his hands and to repeat a prayer, to purify himself from the defilement.

hardships which, though trifling in themselves, become distressing by their diurnal occurrence. To an invalid, it is desirable to make a bed of a palanquin, as in that case the noise around, to which a traveller will soon become accustomed, forms the only disturbance; the bearers take up the vehicle, and the period of rising is postponed until the close of the morning's journey. There are always *doolies* (palanquins enclosed with cloth curtains) belonging to the hospital, in readiness for the officers or sepoy who may chance to be taken ill upon the road; but, notwithstanding the strict precautions which are observed to prevent disagreeable consequences from such accidents, in long and difficult marches delicate persons are sometimes exposed to fatigues and hardships of a very serious nature.

A lady, travelling in a palanquin, relinquished it for the accommodation of her husband, who was seized with an attack of illness at too great a distance from the hospital conveyances to avail himself of them. The lady ventured to perform the morning's journey in the *hackery* which conveyed her female attendants, and, after suffering a martyrdom from the jolting of the vehicle, had the misfortune to be overturned upon the banks of a *nullah*. This accident obliged her to wade through the stream

with her women, and to walk afterwards a distance of three miles in her wet clothes, at the risk of catching a fever: fortunately, no dangerous consequences ensued; but the bare idea of such a pilgrimage, amidst the wastes and wilds of an Indian jungle, must be terrifying to those who are acquainted with the effects which too frequently follow from exposure to the sun. Gentlemen seldom attempt to walk to any distant point without having a horse or a palanquin behind them.

The dinner in camp is usually as well supplied with the products of the larder, as the repast served up in a settled establishment. Several very excellent dishes have been invented, which are peculiarly adapted to the cooking apparatus suited to a jungle or some unreclaimed waste hitherto unconscious of culinary toils. A *Burdwān* stew ranks high amongst these concoctions, and two sauces which go under the name of *shikārree* (hunters') and camp-sauce, are assuredly the most piquant adjuncts to flesh and fowl which the genius of a *gastronome* has ever compounded. Immediately after dinner, the *khidmutghars*, cooks, and *mus-saulohees*, pack up the utensils belonging to their department, and set forward with the tent, which is to be the morrow's dwelling, leaving the bearers

to attend at tea, or to furnish the materials for a stronger beverage for the evening's refreshment : their objection to the table-service extending only to repasts composed of animal food. By these arrangements, the chances of being obliged to *bivouac* for hours under a tree are considerably lessened ; but where no second tent can be afforded, the travellers must inevitably acquire experimental knowledge of the delectabilities of living in the fresh air.

A young officer attached to the rear-guard, in coming late into camp, hot, dusty, and wearied to death, has occasionally the mortification of seeing his tent struck, by order of some rigid Martinet, perchance a temporary commandant, dressed in a little brief authority, who has discovered that it is not in its proper situation : another site is to be found ; meanwhile, like Jacques, " under the shade of melancholy boughs," he takes a gloomy aspect of human nature, or if unused to the pensive mood, devotes the ruthless author of his misfortune to Zamiel, or some such classic personage. He has, in all probability, risen long before day-break, has performed the first part of his morning's duties shivering with cold, pierced through and through by the keen blasts of a cutting wind, though for

the last four hours, his exposure to a burning sun has enabled him to compare the miseries of Nova Zembla with those of an Indian desert ; and, unless from downright exhaustion, he has little patience left to await the time in which he may hope to stretch his aching limbs beneath the shelter of a tent.

Occasionally, during a long march, it is necessary to halt for a day or two upon the road, in order to refresh the weary frames of men and cattle toiling under the burthen of the camp equipage. The close vicinity of a large station is most frequently chosen for this sojourn, as it enables the officers to replenish their stock of European supplies. The camp on these days presents a busy scene ; the *dobies* seize the opportunity to wash and iron their masters' clothes ; mending, making, and repairing of garments, saddles, harness, and tackle of all descriptions, take place, and if there has been a fall of rain, the wetted articles are dried in the sun. Should the station be celebrated for its gaiety, invitations for a ball and supper meet the regiment upon the road ; something like a sensation is created by the prospect of entertaining strangers, and the officers of the corps marching through, are not unwilling to diversify the monotony of a camp by

entering into the festivities of a social cantonment. Sometimes the march is less agreeably retarded by a change of weather.

When the breaking-up of the rains is protracted beyond the customary period, those regiments first appointed to take the field, are exposed to the torrents which invariably mark the closing of the season. An Indian tent is so constructed as to keep out any ordinary quantity of water that may be showered upon it, but it cannot withstand a deluge; trenches are dug round to prevent the accumulation of pools and puddles on the floor,—too frequently an useless attempt, for when the canvas roof has been thoroughly soaked through, there is no possibility of keeping the interior dry.

A wet camp is the most deplorable of all wretched places; groupes of miserable creatures huddle themselves together under some inefficient shed; coldness and discomfort reign in every part; there are few fires; the wood is wet and will not burn; the cooking-places have been washed away, and still the flood pours down, giving no hope of abatement, no chance of dinner and dry beds. Happy may those persons esteem themselves who have palanquins or close carriages to repair to in these melancholy circumstances; they at least afford a refuge

from the pelting rain, and biscuits and brandy supply the place of a regular meal. Three or four days of such weather prove a trial of strength and patience, which requires a more than ordinary portion of mental and bodily endurance to support : invention and ingenuity are taxed to the utmost for the means of existence for those delicate sufferers, ladies and children, who are compelled to bear the buffetings of the storm. At length, the sky clears up ; men and beasts, looking more than half dead, emerge from their dripping lairs ; fires are kindled upon the first dry spots, and gradually, under the vivifying influence of the sun, partial comfort, at least, is restored to the tents. There is no such thing as stirring during the continuance of the rain, and the dreadful state of the roads, cut up in every direction, will offer many impediments to the march, which must be renewed as soon as it is practicable to proceed.

A more common and more bearable misery sustained in a camp is caused by the strong winds, which sweep across the plains of Hindostan in the cold season. When these are very violent, although the tent may withstand their power, and maintain its erect position, it is impossible to keep out the dust : it makes its way through every crevice, and

becomes at length an almost intolerable nuisance. But a canvas habitation is not always proof against a tornado: neither ropes nor pins can avail when the tempest lets loose all its force. The cordage cracks, the pins are torn up from the ground, away rolls the tent, demolishing in its progress the furniture it contained, and enveloping those unfortunates, who may not have made a timely escape, in clouds of canvas.

Long marches are, however, often performed without obstruction or accident of any kind; and it is very practicable to traverse the country in the rains, when they do not come down absolutely in torrents for days together: at least, a distance of a hundred miles may be compassed without much difficulty, especially as, in short marches, two stages may be performed at once without distressing the people or their beasts of burthen.

After a tedious sojourn in the jungles, an invitation to spend the season at a large station induced the writer and another lady to make an attempt to cross the country in the midst of the rains, escorted only by servants, and a guard of sepoys. We took twelve camels with us, and loaded them lightly with a couple of tents, it being necessary to make their burthens as little

oppressive as possible. In order to guard against the uncomfortableness of sitting on damp earth, we had a wooden platform constructed, raised two inches from the ground, which our *dobee* afterwards secured for an ironing-board, and we took care to be well supplied with setringees and small mats. Our train consisted of a *khansamah*, who had the direction of the whole journey, three *khidmutghars*, a *sirdar-bearer*, the tailor, the washerman, the water-carrier, the cook and *mus-saulchees*, twelve bearers for each palanquin, and *claishees* (tent-pitchers), *banghie-bearers* and *coolies* almost innumerable. Our two female attendants travelled in a hackery, with a favourite Persian cat, which seemed to be the most discomposed of the whole party by the journey. Our *cortège* preceded us by a day, and were directed to push on to a place about six-and-twenty miles distant. We followed before day-break the next morning, and, though many parts of the country were flooded, and our progress was necessarily slow, reached our little encampment before one in the day, having had no rain, and experiencing only trifling inconvenience from the heat.

Our people had chosen a very picturesque spot, having pitched the tent in front of a small

mango tope, opposite to a well, which was shaded by a magnificent tamarind-tree. An old Moosulman city, formerly a place of considerable importance, reared its time-worn walls to the left ; while to the right, a rich tract, beautifully wooded, and decked with silvery lakes, stretched itself as far as the eye could reach. The city proved a very interesting object to strangers, who had hitherto only surveyed the towns of India from the rivers ; it was surrounded by high battlemented walls of dark red stone, flanked with solid buttresses, and seemed to have been a place of great strength in other days. The fortifications had fallen to decay, and through gaps in the upper part of the massy walls the domes of mosques were visible, while here and there an open cupola reared its head, the decoration apparently of some wealthy native's mansion. A large archway, furnished with strong wooden gates, gave glimpses of the principal street ; and the peaceable occupations of the inhabitants, and their songs, which came in snatches on the breeze, harmonized soothingly with the calm aspect of the scene.

Our four-and-twenty bearers, the instant they had given up the charge of the palanquins, flung themselves down upon the ground, and fell fast

asleep ; but the rest of our people were busy, some cooking their own meals, and others preparing for our refreshment. We found the tent furnished with a couch to repose upon during the day, and our breakfast *à la fourchette* was served up in excellent style : it was followed by an early dinner, and we were amused by the packing and departure of our second tent, with the party attached to it. The men girded up their loins, rolled their trowsers above their knees, and taking large staffs in their hands, set forward with an air of great resolution : the *khansamah*, as became his dignity, being mounted upon a tattoo, which seemed rather in a crazy condition ; the women disposed themselves in their hackery, and we were left to the care of our sirdar-bearer, a couple of sepoy, and three *chokeydars* from the neighbouring city. We chose to make beds of our palanquins, which were brought into the tent, and the sirdar-bearer laid himself down in front, apparently unwilling to allow his charge to be out of his sight. He brought us tea at starting, and we proceeded very early in the morning, not expecting to see him or the tent again, as we had made up our minds, in consequence of having received letters urging despatch, on account of a ball which

was to take place in a few days, to wait at the houses of the *thannadars* of the villages while our bearers took their needful rest, rather than lose the expected gratification by lingering on the road. Our servants, with whom we could have very little oral communication, on account of our ignorance of Hindoostanee, were aware of our intention, through the medium of an epistle in Persian, forwarded to the *khansamah*, of which he seemed not a little proud; and the sirdar, who had never shewn much activity or energy before, performed wonders in the display of his gratitude for the remarkably easy life which he had been allowed to lead.

It was twelve o'clock before we reached the tent, which had been sent on, and which we found pleasantly situated near a pagoda, and where we received a visit from a respectable person, handsomely attired, who made his *salaams*, and gave us to understand that he had been directed by the district judge to afford us every accommodation in his power. After partaking of a repast, in which the grilled fowl and chicken-broth were excellent, at four o'clock, our bearers being refreshed, we went on another march, and, to our surprise and pleasure, found the tent which we had left in the morning, ready to receive us. The sirdar must

have broken up his encampment the instant we left it, and have gone forward without waiting to rest upon the road. He had fortunately chosen the close vicinity of a *serai* for our night's sojourn, since the clouds, which had hitherto befriended us, had now gathered in a portentous manner, and the rain soon began to descend in heavy and continuous showers. Our people found shelter in the before-mentioned *serai*, a handsome stone quadrangle, which we had had an opportunity of reconnoitring before the rain came on, and were therefore easy upon their account. The *khansamah*, who shortly afterwards arrived with the second tent, could not be prevailed upon to remain, but went off again almost immediately, being determined not to be outdone by the sirdar: he must have had a weary march of it, for the night was dreadfully dark, and the waters were out all over the low grounds. Another *thannadar* made his appearance, and earnestly recommended us, in consequence of the state of the country, not to depart before daylight; we took his advice, and prepared to spend the intervening hours as agreeably as the circumstances would admit. Our tent was impervious to the weather, and, were it otherwise, we could not get wet in our palanquins.

We had been advised that no baggage would be safe which was not under the immediate charge of a sentinel. It is the custom to pile every portable article on the outside of the tent, close to the guard; but as we feared they would not be water-proof, we had our trunks brought under cover, and directed the sepoy to enter the tent, and keep watch over them there. Our faithful sirdar took up his usual post by the side of the palanquins, and a *chokeydar* established himself at every opening. The tent was lined with dark cloth; a single lamp shed its solitary ray over the sleepers and the guard, and as I looked out upon the strange group with whom I was so closely associated, the *coup-d'œil* reminded me of a scene in a melodrame, representing a robber's cave.

We recommenced our journey on the following morning, in the midst of heavy rain, and made little progress through the floods, which had considerably increased since the preceding day. Our bearers seemed much distressed, and we were glad to allow them to rest occasionally: they were not unmindful of our comfort, but, when refreshing themselves, brought milk to the palanquin-doors, which we very thankfully accepted, as we had not provided ourselves with bottles of tea. About the

middle of the day we came up to the tent, which we quitted before night, as we found that relays of bearers had been engaged to carry us on to the place of our destination, which we reached at an early hour on the following morning. An invitation awaited us to dine at four o'clock with a friend in the neighbourhood: we dressed and went, not expecting to be attended by our servants at table; but shortly after the commencement of the meal, all the *khidmutghars* made their appearance, attired in their best clothes, and not evincing any marks of fatigue from the extraordinary exertions they had made.

During the whole of this journey, we were strongly impressed with a feeling of gratitude and good-will towards the natives of India, who, upon all occasions, manifested an anxious desire to assure us of their respect and attachment. The highly civilized state of the country, and the courteous manners of all classes of the people, render travelling both easy and agreeable to those persons who are contented with the performance of possibilities, and who are not inclined to purchase an ill name by acts of tyranny and oppression.

In the cold season, the civilians of India often realize those exquisite dreams raised by the charm-

ing pictures of the wood of Ardennes, in Shakespeare's enchanting delineation of sylvan life. They frequently live for weeks together "under the green-wood tree," a merry groupe of foresters, not even encountering an enemy "in winter and rough weather," for the finest period of the year is chosen for their visits to remote parts of the districts, and the climate is of the most desirable temperature: clear sunny skies, attended by breezes cool enough to render woollen garments, and the cheerful blaze of a fire essential to comfort. Upon these occasions, large parties are invited to accompany the judge, or the collector, who, while he is engaged in business at his temporary kutcherry, amuse themselves with hunting, shooting, or playing at golf. Ladies are always ready to accompany their male relatives upon these excursions; they are glad to exchange the strict formalities of some dull station for a social circle composed of picked persons, bent upon enjoying any pleasure that may offer, and anxious to meet each other every day, and all day long.

Double-poled tents, thickly carpeted, and containing numerous apartments, furnish all the luxuries of a settled home in these gay *pic-nics*, which afford the best display of the grandeur and magni-

ficence of India which the Asiatic style of living can produce. It is peculiar to the country, and could not be surpassed by a congress of princes meeting in the open field. A guard of mounted *sauwars*, a train of elephants, and studs of horses of the finest breeds, are amid the most splendid accompaniments of the gorgeous tents, which spread their light pavilions under the embowering trees. The servants are all in their richest attire, and in such vast numbers as to appear like the myriads conjured up on the green sward by the magician of some fairy tale.

A youth of a vivid imagination can scarcely be persuaded that the romantic scene before him is not a fanciful creation of the brain, a dream of enchantment from which he must awake to sad and sober reality. Notwithstanding the evidence of his senses, it is difficult to convince him of the possibility of the actual existence of so much elegance and refinement in the centre of moss-grown rocks and apparently interminable forests; he is full of doubt and wonder, now delighted with some incident of savage life,—the rousing a huge elk from his lair,—and now solacing himself with the latest importation of Parisian perfumery, or the pages of a fashionable novel. His apartment is furnished with

all the luxurious appendages which modern art has invented ; his breakfast consists of delicate viands, exquisitely cooked ; and after a day's delightful sport, rendered still more exciting by exposure to danger, perils faced and overcome, he returns to a lighted apartment, spread with a noble banquet, and filled with a charming assembly of graceful women, with whom, for the rest of the evening, he enjoys sweet converse, or listens to still sweeter songs.

The ladies have their full share of the pleasures of the sylvan scene, and the unmarried females are doubly dangerous when appearing in the shape of wood-nymphs : many a determined bachelor has surrendered his heart to the fair one who has smiled sweetly on the tiger-cub snatched by his daring hand from its enraged mother, and has made so great a pet of it, that he cannot bear to part them, or to leave her with so dangerous a playmate. There is no ball-room flirtation half so hazardous to bachelorhood as the attentions which gentlemen are called upon to pay in the jungles of India ; and could the dowagers of a London circle contrive such a spell-working propinquity for their daughters, the grand business of their lives would be achieved without further trouble or anxiety.

The wealthy natives, in the neighbourhood of a

moving *kutcherry* or court, anxious to pay their respects to the great man who is at the head of it, make their appearance in the encampment, with all the pomp they can muster. In former times, when presents were permitted, the ladies had shawls and pearl necklaces laid at their feet, whenever a rajah or a nawaub approached them. Those golden days are over, and the communication between natives and Europeans has sustained a shock, in consequence of the total abolition of all *nussurs*. The natives are unwilling to present themselves without making some offering, however trifling, which they have been accustomed to consider a necessary mark of respect. It is in vain they are assured that they will be as welcome as if they came loaded with gifts; they cannot be persuaded to appear empty handed; and the poor man, who saw his little offering of fruit or vegetables graciously received, now does not like to intrude upon the presence of his superior, though perhaps it was the pride of his heart to make his weekly salaams to the *saiib*.

A dangerous vicinity to the fiercer tribes of wild animals does not deter ladies from accompanying their husbands or brothers in the tour of the district: no wildernesses less dreadful than the melancholy wastes of the Sunderbunds can appal their

adventurous spirits. There the solitudes are too awful, the dominion of beasts of prey too absolute, and the *malaria*, arising from unreclaimed marshes and impenetrable woods, too perilous to be encountered by any person not compelled by duty to traverse the savage scene. Attended only by a few natives, whose services are indispensable, the civilians, whose appointments lead them to spend a part of the year in this desert spot, wear out the time not devoted to business in perfect loneliness. They describe the early *réveille* of the fierce denizens of the woods, the wild cries of the birds, the deep roar of prowling beasts, and the sullen echoes from rock, ravine, and morass, as awe-inspiring, even to accustomed ears ; and no splendour of scenery, no luxuriance of vegetation, can reconcile them to an abode so completely usurped by tribes inimical to man. But, in less dreary scenes, troops of gay chasseurs live merrily “under the blossom that hangs on the bough ;” their pleasures are enhanced by the news that a tiger stalks in the surrounding jungle, or that the rhinoceros, or the wild buffalo, has made his lair in the long grass. Their spears and rifles make deadly havoc amid these horrid monsters ; the camp at night is blazing with fires, and the cattle secured by temporary stockades. The

ladies sleep securely in the tents, and the servants are safely disposed between the outer and inner *kanauts*, which, the walls and roofs being double, form covered passages all round.

Few accidents occur where proper precautions have been taken; a sheep is sometimes carried off, and a party locating in the Rajmhal hills, rather surprised and somewhat alarmed by the constant visits of tigers, discovered that they had pitched their camp upon the track made by these animals to the Ganges, and had, in fact, established themselves upon one of the great thoroughfares of the brute nations around.

CHAPTER VII.

PATNA.

PATNA is the first native city of wealth and importance passed by the voyagers of the Ganges, on their way to the upper country. It stands on the right bank of the river, in the province of Behar; and here the marshy soil of Bengal is exchanged for the arid sands of Hindostan: camels seldom penetrate farther, and from this point the hot winds cease to be felt; those which blow in the damp atmosphere of Bengal not being worthy of the name. The thermometer may be equally high, but the heat outside the house is more supportable, and the disadvantage of which many complain, arising from the uselessness of *tatties*, is counterbalanced by the pleasures of the evening drive. As soon as the sun has set, it is practicable to go out; whereas, in the plains of Hindostan, the air does not become cool until the night is far advanced.

Patna, though it does not contain any single building of great celebrity or peculiar beauty, is

rich in the remains of Moosulman splendour, and its appearance from the river is highly picturesque. The houses of the wealthy classes, which are very numerous, are handsome buildings, flat-roofed, and surrounded by carved balustrades. Many are of considerable extent, and, though exhibiting the usual symptoms of neglect, when seen from a distance make a good appearance. The intermixture of these residences with peepul trees, broad ghauts the remains of Gothic gateways of dark red stone (which possess a truly feudal air), and the numerous temples devoted to Hindoo and Moosulman worship, produce a striking effect; and when the river is full and brimming to its banks, turret, spire, and dome being reflected in its broad mirror, the *coup-d'œil* is exceedingly imposing.

Patna cannot fail to excite a strong degree of interest in a stranger's breast, since it is a scene of one of the gallant Clive's heroic actions. It was here that, seated on a gun, weary and battle-stained, he surprised his native allies by his treatment of his prisoners. Instead of the immediate sacrifice, which they confidently expected, they saw him anxious to console the dejected captives for their disastrous defeat, and beheld the French commander, whose valour and talents had for so long a

period threatened the downfall of British dominion in the East, become reconciled to life by the noble demeanour of his generous enemy. The tardy justice rendered to Clive cannot satisfy the minds of those who have traced him through the scenes of his extraordinary career. Destined for mercantile pursuits, he became a soldier at the call of danger, and paused not upon his adventurous course until he had secured some of the fairest provinces of India to the British crown. The annexation of Patna to the Company's territories rendered the subjugation of the upper country comparatively easy, for after this brilliant achievement, the dream of future conquests might be freely indulged.

Upon its first subjection to the Company, the city of Patna became the residence of the civilians employed by the Government : but it has long been abandoned, in consequence of a treacherous attack made upon them by Cossim Ali, at the instigation of a low German whom he had taken into his service, and they have now established themselves at Bankipore, a convenient spot by the river's side, a short distance beyond the suburbs. The houses of the numerous civil servants of the Company who belong to the Behar district, are built in the style of those of Calcutta, and are chiefly *puckah* ; many

are very stately edifices, having broad terraces overlooking the Ganges, and being surrounded with luxuriant plantations.

The situation of Patna possesses many advantages. Being placed on the border of Bengal, it commands an easy communication with the upper and lower country; supplies are procured from Calcutta, by the river, in a few weeks; and the earliest choice of articles may be obtained from the cargoes of vessels bound to more distant stations. Books and English newspapers do not become stale before their arrival; and the inhabitants, keeping up a more regular intercourse with Europe, are not so entirely dependent upon the Indian press for intelligence from home as those attached to more remote stations, where the loss of boats laden with new publications, and the detention of files of London journals, soon weary and disgust persons not gifted with an extraordinary degree of patience. The civilians of Bankipore have also the opportunity of seeing and entertaining all travellers of consequence proceeding up or down the river, and their appointments, though clipped and curtailed, being comparatively liberal, they are enabled to keep up a portion of the ancient hospitality. The society in every part of India must always be sus-

ceptible of great fluctuation; but so extensive a district as Behar, cannot, at any period, fail to possess a very fair proportion of the talent and intelligence of the country. It is not, therefore, surprising that the head-quarters, Bankipore, should always be distinguished for the intellectuality and elegance of its principal residents.

The establishment of a lithographic press, through the spirited exertions of Sir Charles D'Oyly, to whose taste for the fine arts the scientific world is so deeply indebted, is alone sufficient to render Patna a place of no ordinary interest to travellers in search of information. The vicinity of the province of Behar to the Rajmhal hills, and the still wilder ranges of Nepaul, has enabled a circle of amateurs to collect specimens of the rarest and most beautiful natural productions of the East. A work upon ornithology, which issues regularly from the Behar press, contains coloured drawings from living subjects of the most interesting individuals of the feathered tribe to be found on the continent of India. Such pursuits must necessarily tend to improve the taste of those who are so fortunate as to be thrown into the society at Bankipore: a talent for drawing, one of the most useful accomplishments in India, may be cultivated to the

greatest advantage under the auspices of the directors of the press, and there can be no more effectual preservative from the *ennui* of some stations, and the dissipation of others, than the direction of the mind towards useful studies connected with the history, natural or political, of the country.

The military cantonments of Dinapore are only a few miles distant, and at favourable periods contribute not a little to the gaiety of the district. This distinction must always be made in commenting upon the society of Mofussil stations; for the individuals composing it are frequently so exceedingly perverse, that it is impossible to persuade them to coalesce in any plan of amusement. Gentlemen, after having been at all the expense attendant upon giving a ball, are sometimes compelled to divert themselves in the best manner they can devise, without the assistance of their expected partners, all of whom, in consequence perhaps of some trifling pique, have sent excuses at the last hour. The supper, under these circumstances, forms the only consolation, and the fair absentees are doubtless remembered in the libations which ensue. Ladies have also been known to retreat *en masse* from a dinner party, to be succeeded by dancing, offended by the smell of cheroots proceeding from

a neighbouring apartment. The consternation of the host, upon seeing the drawing-room deserted, and the whole of the fair *cortège*,—*palkees*, *taun-johns*, chariots, &c. in full retreat from the compound,—may be imagined: the beloved cheroots, however, remain to reconcile the beaux to their loneliness; and it is much to be feared that, in nine cases out of ten, the lady would be voluntarily sacrificed for the cigar. This highly-esteemed preparation of tobacco has nearly superseded the use of the far more elegant hookah; it is not at present tolerated in female society, but the struggle between the rival attractions will be great, and the victory on the side of the ladies extremely doubtful: many devotees preferring banishment from the tea-table to the temporary suspension of their favourite amusement.

The garrison of Dinapore is commanded by a brigadier-general, and in addition to the native force it is usually the station of one King's regiment; but being subjected to the abhorred operation of half-batta, these quarters lie under a ban, and are associated in the minds of all military men with every thing that is hateful. The cantonments are handsome and well laid out, and the performances of the military bands in the evening, upon

the parade-ground, attract the whole population to the spot, affording a cheerful place of assembly, which is wanting at Patna, where there is no rallying point, and where the carriages take different directions in the evening-drive. Dinapore has the advantage of its neighbour in the beauty of the surrounding country ; it is better wooded, and more picturesque ; but it may be said with truth of almost every part of Hindostan, that the face of the country bears two aspects, being exceedingly ugly in the dry season, and very beautiful in the rains. Bengal, on the contrary, is always green, and its appearance is not improved by the inundations of the rivers and the dilapidations caused by cataracts descending upon houses not furnished with proper channels for the conveyance of the water. From a projecting spout on the roofs, whole sheets come down, which are driven by the wind against the walls, and leave large green stains, while shutters and lattices, despoiled of all their paint, groan and creak upon the rusty hinges.

There are portions of the suburbs of Patna, particularly the view from a Moosulman cemetery of considerable extent, which to unprejudiced eyes are exceedingly interesting ; but persons who have resided for a long period in India, and have seen its

finest features, will not admit an inferior landscape to possess a particle of merit; while others, disgusted with the country, deny its claim to admiration altogether. No person should halt at Patna without paying a visit to this lonely burial-ground, which, excepting at one season of the year, is left to perfect solitude. It is a large oblong quadrangle, surrounded by various buildings at unequal distances from each other, some being handsome houses, furnished with double tiers of verandahs, erected for the reception of guests and spectators during the solemn festival of the Mohurram; others of more ancient and solid construction, towers and gateways of dark red stone, reliques of the days of Moslem glory, when the Moghuls swayed the land down to the very mouths of the Ganges. This singular scene, in its tenantless seclusion, conveys the idea of a deserted city to the musing spectator, for the tombs which it contains, occupying a remote corner, are not sufficiently numerous to indicate its true object and design. It overlooks a vast extent of flat country, which during the rains is covered with broad shallow lakes, which lose themselves in deep dark forests, forming an appropriate back-ground: and here buffaloes are seen wallowing in the marshes, an animal which

always gives a wild and even doleful appearance to the landscape. Viewed under the crimson grandeur of the setting sun, the scene is awe-inspiring ; and, as the gloom increases, and the last red gleam dimly illumines the long square, the imagination may easily conjure up the spirits of the dead, the rulers of other days, called from their graves by the hated presence of their pale conquerors from the west.

But this cemetery displays a stirring and magnificent spectacle during the annual imposing ceremonies of the Mohurram.* Patna is a strong-hold of Mohammedanism, and the disciples of the prophet who dwell within its walls, are described as being far more fanatic and intolerant than their brethren of Bengal, who have sadly degenerated from the true faith, and are given to pay homage at idol shrines. The riches of the city enable it to celebrate the obsequies of the young martyrs, Hossein and Houssein, in a very splendid manner ; and this noble square is selected for the final depository of the *taxees*, or tombs, which are carried about in commemoration of the funeral honours paid by the followers of Ali to his slaughtered sons. The whole population of Patna, Moslem, Christian, and

* A subsequent chapter will contain a more detailed account of this interesting festival.

Hindoo, assemble to witness the procession. Persons of rank are accommodated in the houses before-mentioned, whose roofs are crowded by immense multitudes. Great respect is paid to the Christian spectators, not only on account of their position in the country, but because it is believed that persons of their persuasion remonstrated against the cruel persecution of the young princes by the disciples of Omar. The whole square rings with shouts of "Hossein ! Houssein !" accompanied by deep groans and beatings on the breast, while amid the discharge of musketry, the last sad scene is enacted by groups personating the combatants of that fatal battle in which Hossein perished. Whenever the venerated martyr is beaten to the ground, the lamentations are redoubled, many being only withheld by force from inflicting desperate wounds upon themselves. Woe to any of the followers of Omar who should dare to intrude upon the mourners ; the battle is then renewed in earnest. Whole companies of sepoys have been known to engage in deadly combat with each other, and numerous lives are lost in the revival of the old dispute respecting the claims of the sons of Ali, in opposition to those of Omar, who represents himself as the adopted heir of the prophet. It requires the utmost vigilance on the

part of the magistracy to prevent the recurrence of bloodshed in the fierce collision of contending parties at Patna during the festival ; the Moosulman population of that place being more turbulent and arrogant, and, as it has been already remarked, more bigoted, than those of any other city belonging to the Company's territories. Even the mild Hindoos are not very governable upon these occasions.

The enormous wealth of Patna is probably the chief cause of the pride and insolence of the inhabitants. Many of the great men of the city are exceedingly rich ; and at a *darbar* held by Lord Amherst, on his way to the upper provinces, one of them offered, and it is said gave, a lac of rupees to have his name inserted at the head of the list of native gentlemen who paid their respects to the Governor-general on that occasion : the consequence which this precedence would ensure him amongst his own people being well worth the money bestowed upon it.

Patna carries on an extensive trade, and is famous for its manufactories of table-linen and wax-candles. It also possesses very expert workmen in every department of mechanical art ; amongst the minor branches are bird-cages, constructed with great ingenuity and even elegance ; the frames of some

being delicately inlaid with ivory, while the wires of others are strung with coloured beads. The natives of India of all ranks are fond of keeping birds as domestic pets; and at the proper seasons, persons go into the hill-districts for the purpose of collecting the rarer sorts, which are carried about for sale to all parts of the country. The beautiful little *avadavats*, or *lālls*, as they are commonly called by the natives, on account of their bright ruby colour, are in great request; these, together with many other kinds, are easily procurable at Patna; where also may be found bears, and the fiercer inhabitants of the hills, in a state of captivity. This city is a grand mart for opium, that precious commodity which enriches so many of the native agents, who, as they wax wealthy, live in the style and assume the title of nawábs. The soil is favourable to the growth of potatoes, a vegetable which is much cultivated for native consumption in India; but the London traders, who recommend their rice as the true produce of Patna, are in error in vending the grain of superior quality under that name. Rice is chiefly grown in the low marshy tracts of Bengal, and it is not extensively cultivated any where else: nor does it constitute the food of the people of Patna,

who substitute cakes made of flour as the accompaniment of their *kaaries*; it is dear, on account of its being brought from a distance, and in the upper provinces only appears upon grand occasions at the tables of the lower orders, who are exceedingly economical in their mode of living, and to whom the bazaar-prices are affairs of the greatest importance.

The streets of Patna can only be traversed on horseback, or upon an elephant, being too narrow to admit of any wheel-carriage superior to the native *rhut*, a creaking, nodding, nondescript vehicle, in which the ladies of the country, concealed from public view by thick curtains, huddle themselves when they travel or pay visits. The best houses face the river; many of these have a dismal appearance on the side of the street, shewing only a high blank wall, perforated with a few small windows in the upper story; a free circulation of air apparently not being considered essential to health or comfort. Other mansions are enclosed in large walled courts; and in passing along the principal street many porticoes are visible, peeping out of recesses or small quadrangles, which seem to be the entrances to stately buildings belonging to people of rank. The houses tenanted by the middling

classes are exceedingly crazy, and have somewhat of a Chinese air, each story lessening in size, and standing in the verandah of the one below. They are removed, according to the Indian custom, a little from the public path, crowded during the day with men and animals (horses, buffaloes, bullocks, camels, and goats), by being raised upon a platform about a foot high from the street. The houses occupy the centre of this platform, a margin being left all round, which sometimes stretches beyond the verandah, and forms a shelf, or counter, on which the goods of the inferior shopkeepers are displayed in baskets, none of the richer and more elegant articles being exposed to public view in India. The shops of the *hukeems*, or apothecaries, make the best appearance; they are furnished, in the primitive style, with herbs of various kinds, neatly arranged, and reminding the stranger of the descriptions given in some of the histories of London of the ancient state of Bucklersbury, when simples formed the stock in trade of medical practitioners.

Amid much that is unsightly, there is a great deal to admire in the long avenue which stretches from gate to gate of the city, every few yards bringing some picturesque object to view; lofty

open cupolas, in the most elegant style of Moghul architecture, surmounting handsome mosques, are contrasted with solid towers of the dark-red stone, which seems to have been the favourite material in former times. The houses built for the accommodation of the English residents, on the first occupation of the city, now long deserted and falling into decay, have a singular and melancholy appearance. Their construction, after the European fashion, shews that they were destined for foreigners; and their desolation recalls to the mind the tragic fate of those who trusted themselves to a hostile race, smarting under the recollection of recent defeat.

A large piece of ground, consecrated and converted into a Christian cemetery, spreads its grass-grown mounds in the midst of the dwellings of the heathen and the unbeliever, and is still the burial-place of those who have the misfortune to die within the reach of its doleful precincts. The crowded charnels belonging to the Christian community of India are usually sufficiently dreary to fill the breasts of the living with horror and disgust, but that of Patna asserts a painful pre-eminence over all the rest; and if the dead could feel discontented with the place of their interment,—a fact supported

by' ghost-stories of great authority,—they would assuredly arise from graves dug in this unhallowed spot, and flit and gibber through the streets: a most effectual plan to rid themselves of their Pagan and Moosulman neighbours, who are exceedingly superstitious, and refuse to enter dwellings which have the reputation of being haunted.

Those who are willing to brave the dirt and heat of a closely-built city, may find much amusement in an evening's visit to Patna. The streets are crowded to excess, the whole male population swarming out to enjoy the dust, or assembling in the verandahs to smoke their hookahs, while gazing on the scene below. Native *palkees*, *taunjohns*, and *rhuts*, force their way through masses of men and boys, the attendants being little scrupulous about the manner in which they clear the avenues for their masters' equipages. Nothing in India can be done without noise, and the din of the passengers is increased by the cries of *chokeydars*, and the incessant vociferations of *fakeers* stationed at the corners of the streets. The shops are all lighted up, and as the evening advances, the dusky buildings which rear themselves against a dark blue sky studded with innumerable stars, have a solemn and imposing appearance; much that is paltry and sordid is ob-

scured in deep shadow, and only the more prominent objects are revealed to the eye. Patna at this time assumes a gorgeous aspect, presenting a succession of temples and palaces worthy to have been the abodes of the luxurious Moghuls.

The city is not often honoured by European visitors, who seldom approach it except upon duty. When there is no particular object of celebrity to attract attention, Anglo-Indians, either from contempt or apathy, rarely enter the native towns in their neighbourhood; few take any interest in the study of Eastern manners, and they are, generally speaking, so careless of pleasing or offending the people amid whom they reside, that however respected the government may be for its good faith and wise ordinances, its civil and military servants can scarcely fail to be exceedingly unpopular in their private and personal character. Intercourse with foreign nations has not yet had the effect of softening and polishing the manners of our proud and disdainful islanders, who usually contrive to make themselves hated wherever they go. The gracious example of a few distinguished individuals, whose courtesy has endeared them to all ranks and classes, is unfortunately disregarded by the majority of British residents in India.

On the opposite bank of the river, at Hadgeepore, a fair is held annually, which attracts a vast concourse of people, both native and European, to its festivities. Duty carries some of the civil servants to the scene of action, and others proceed thither in order to recreate themselves, during a brief period, with the amusements which the assemblage of families from various parts of the country seldom fails to occasion. The fair takes place at a convenient season, the commencement of the cold weather; the visitors, who carry their own habitations with them, pitch their tents on the plain, and when there is a full attendance, form extensive camps; natives and Europeans of course occupying places distinct from each other. Fancy balls and private theatricals constitute the principal amusements of the latter, neither being the less entertaining on account of the contrivances necessary to enable the persons engaged in them to support fictitious characters in appropriate costume. An impromptu masquerade in a desert, is one of the most amusing things imaginable; and in the unwonted activity which it produces, and the astonishing degree of ingenuity which it brings forth, the Anglo-Indians appear to the greatest advantage. The actual fair is of course a very secondary object; they, how-

ever, who have enough cash to make extensive purchases, may provide themselves with the richest productions of the East,—shawls, pearls, gold ornaments, and precious stones. Many of the tents are extremely splendid, those of the wealthy natives, in particular, being profusely bordered with scarlet cloth, cut into fanciful patterns. The double-poled tents of the civilians are scarcely, if at all, inferior in their external decorations, and the interiors are furnished with great elegance. Rich carpets are spread over the *setringees* which cover the floor, and small chandeliers are suspended from the roofs. The walls are hung with some gay-patterned chintz, and the sideboards glitter with plate. No privations are felt by the dwellers under canvas; the repasts are equally well served in the midst of a sandy waste as in the kitchen attached to a magnificent mansion.

The evening scene is highly picturesque; all the cookery, for men and animals, native and European, is performed in the open air, and innumerable fires are kindled for the purpose in every direction. Round some may be seen the turbaned attendants of great men, preparing their master's meal; others, very scantily clothed, bend their swart faces over the cauldrons which contain their

vegetable stews, appearing, as the flickering flame ascends, like demons superintending some infernal beverage. In one place piles of flat cakes, called *chupatties*, rise, on which the elephants, for whom they are intended, look with approving eyes; and in another, a servant stands guardian over the dishes of *kaarie* which are cooling for the dogs. Some groupes are sleeping, some smoking, others singing and beating the *tom-tom*, while gaily-dressed ladies are alighting from their carriages, and entering the tents already illuminated for the evening.

There is no uncertainty of climate in India to derange the measures taken to secure the comfort of a camp, during the proper season for living *al fresco*; but when necessity obliges parties to betake themselves to their tents at a less favourable period of the year, they are subjected to a variety of accidents of a very formidable nature. On one memorable occasion, the officers of a regiment, compelled to perform a long march at a time in which variable weather might be expected, were desirous to give a dinner to another corps in a similar predicament, who crossed them on their road. Preparations were made upon a grand scale; the presiding *khansamah* did his best, produced his choicest stores of European luxuries, and committed great

slaughter amongst the sheep and poultry. The roasts, boils, grills, and stews, were of the most approved quality, and as usual, in quantity superabundant. Every thing promised fair for such an entertainment as never fails to gladden the heart of an Indian *maître-d'hotel*, who, though he would not, upon any consideration, taste a single drop of the gravy which his art has concocted for an European table, surveys with pride and exultation the long array of dishes which he has provided for his master's guests.

Just as the dinner was taking up, lo ! a sudden and most tremendous hurricane swept over the plain, burying fires, pots, pans, and eatables in one wide waste of sand. The distraction of the servants at this unexpected catastrophe is not to be described ; vehement in their gesticulations, some beat their breasts, others tore their hair, while the more collected secured the joints, sole wrecks of a splendid dinner. The sand had penetrated every where, inundating the soup-kettles, and enveloping the grills ; the only resource was to pare off the outsides of the ham and the legs of mutton, and these mutilated relics were placed upon the board by the crest-fallen *khansamah*, who, having got over the first burst of his despair, gravely informed

the hungry guests, gazing upon the empty space before them, that "it was the will of heaven that they should go without their dinner." Fortunately, he had to deal with reasonable men, who did not expect him to contend against the elements, and he experienced only the mortification attendant upon unsuccessful efforts. Such accidents as this rarely occur, even in the worst seasons; for when there is any warning of an approaching storm, the servants always take precautions for the security of the viands, and in the rains, they not unfrequently wade knee-deep through water, with smoking dishes on their heads, from the cooking-place to their master's table.

A description of Patna, however slight and superficial, would be exceedingly incomplete unless some mention should be made of a very interesting place in the neighbourhood, Deegah Farm, the extensive establishment of Mr. Havell, who conducts his business upon a scale of magnificence which is unequalled throughout India. There is a class of Europeans, settled at the principal stations, who style themselves "provisioners," a name very expressive of their occupation, and of these Mr. Havell is at the head. His large and beautifully-kept farm-yards are stored with all sorts of domes-

tic animals, and his pigs in particular are far-famed; they are of Chinese and English breed; for, though the wild boars of the jungles are supposed to yield the finest pork in the world, the tame variety, fed upon offal by the lowest castes in India, are an abomination to Christian eyes, and Europeans will not taste the flesh unless they are certain of the pedigree and education of the animal that supplies it, lest they should partake of a part of the long-legged bristly-maned monster, who they, as well as their Moosulman servants, look upon as an unclean beast. Mr. Havell's pigs had the honour to detain the most distinguished personage in India from the expectant garrison of Dinapore, drawn out to receive him. After waiting for several hours in the sun, the sepoy, who do not comprehend the distinction between pigs of quality and those of plebeian origin, were not a little amazed and scandalized when they saw the great man ride up in his *deshabille*, and understood that he had been solacing himself in the pig-sties of Deegah, instead of appearing, at the appointed time, in full costume before the troops anxiously desirous to catch a glimpse of the *Burra Saib*.

Mr. Havell's warehouses are kept in the nicest order, and exhibit a multifarious variety of articles,

properly classed and arranged. Jewellery and millinery, china, glass, hardware, European bird-cages and bird-seed, saddlery, ornamental furniture, foreign fruits, jams, jellies, and preserves, with an endless *et-cetera* of good things for the table. He also deals in carriages and horses, wine, beer, and spirits; in fact, every thing requisite for a liberal establishment is to be found in some of the various departments of this immense concern. Mr. Havell's boats go down to the Sand Heads, at the mouth of the Hooghly, to catch the mango and hilsa-fish, which, after being properly cured, are despatched to every part of India; his humps, his chetney, and his sauces, form a portion of the exports from Calcutta to London; and hams, bacon, and hung beef, prepared at his farm, are highly esteemed even by those who are apt to fancy that nothing of the kind can be excellent which does not come from England. The gardens of Deegah are most beautifully planted and laid out; they contain an immense profusion of European flowers, which attain to great perfection, while those of the country, together with every kind of fruit, from the superiority of the cultivation, are infinitely finer than the productions of gardens less skilfully managed. The native *mallees* are under the superintendence

of Dutch and Chinese gardeners, men of science and practical knowledge; and a residence at Dinapore would be desirable, were it only for the great advantage to be derived from frequent visits to the beautiful parterres which embellish these extensive pleasure-grounds.

Mr. Havell resides in a very handsome house upon his farm, and the strand below is a favourite halting-place for budgerows proceeding up or down the river. Travellers are anxious to supply themselves with live and dead stock from so celebrated an emporium, and all who touch at Deegah experience the obliging attentions of the proprietor, finding as long as they remain in the neighbourhood, the various conveniences of so well-conducted an establishment at their disposal. All are invited to walk in the gardens, and those who are not provided with carriages or palanquins, are offered conveyances to and from Dinapore. Their tables may be furnished from the cook-rooms of the mansion, and baskets of fruits and vegetables accompany the purchases despatched to the boat. Pleasant are the recollections of Deegah, with its talking-birds in cages, its groups of camels, the first that the writer had seen in the country, and its English

planted from Persia by the Moghuls,* and where it is left to the care of inexperienced natives, comes to great perfection. Attention to the soil and culture would doubtless improve the quality of the produce, and this, in the first instance, must be effected by European residents; for where nature has done so much, the Indians themselves are content with its provisions, and think any extra toil an act of supererogation. If, however, they should discover a source of profit in the sale of wine, they would speedily make themselves acquainted with the necessary process; for though averse to innovations, and satisfied to live in precisely the same manner in which their fathers have lived before them, they readily acquire the arts which have been introduced by the new occupiers of the country.

The bread eaten in native houses is very different from that which appears at European tables, but Le Mann himself could scarcely compete with a native baker in the manufacture of fancy bread; and where there is sufficient demand, every article which can be grown or manufactured by natives in India, can be procured from them quite as good,

* Wine was made in India in the time of Acbar, which sold in Europe at a price equal to that of Shiraz.

and at half the price at which it could be furnished by an European. At present, it is only at English farms that veal of tolerably fair quality can be obtained, and even at these places the fattening of calves is very ill understood. As the breed of cattle is particularly diminutive, a well-grown calf in Hindostan is seldom larger than a good sized lamb in England, and the meat is generally lean and of a bad colour. People, before they go out to India, pay little attention to agricultural concerns, and nine out of ten of those who embark in trade take up such employments as happen to be vacant or of good promise, whether they are qualified by previous acquaintanceship or not, that being a secondary consideration. Theoretical knowledge is difficult to acquire where books are scarce and dear, and the practical experience of a few scattered persons is not easily disseminated throughout a country where the British population is always unsettled, and where each individual is only desirous to obtain an income which will enable him to return home. Notwithstanding the long droughts of India, if greater attention was paid to the cultivation of grasses, there would always be sufficient for the consumption of the cattle, which now, during many months of the year, are either kept

upon *gram*, or suffered to pick up a miserable existence upon the coarsest fodder. In the latter case, the milk yielded by the cows is of wretched quality, and the butter of course of very inferior description, while the excellence of that produced under the superintendence of the few gentlemen who are acquainted with the proper method of feeding, shews the capabilities of the country, and renders it grievous that so little is done in the way of improvement.

It is an extraordinary fact, that no European has been at the trouble to instruct the natives in the art of fattening chickens. The small, plump, white, delicate bipeds, which are the ornaments of an English dinner, never make their appearance at an Indian board: half-grown and whole-grown fowls are to be seen, but no dainty little chickens, no turkey poults, and no ducklings. In a country in which poultry of every kind is so abundant, it would be the easiest thing in the world to procure a constant supply of these delicacies; but as the natives are fond of dishes upon a grand scale, they entertain a sovereign contempt for such trifling viands, and require to be informed of their importance by foreigners. The present system of education, in excluding all acquaintance with vulgar

domestic duties, prevents the ladies who go out to India from rectifying the errors of their servants, and amid abundance of every kind, their tables are often deficient in those refinements which might be procured by a very trifling degree of knowledge, and at a very small expense of time and trouble.

CHAPTER VIII.

TRAVELLING BY DAK.

A GREAT number of persons who go out to India to seek their fortunes in the various departments of commerce, or who practise at the supreme courts either as counsel or attornies, or who have obtained permanent employments at Calcutta, Madras, or Bombay, frequently spend their whole lives in the Company's territories, without penetrating farther than the presidency to which they may be attached. But it is otherwise with the civil and military servants of the state: a more unfixed, unsettled, floating community cannot be imagined. If not compelled to change their abodes by virtue of government-orders, the pursuit of health, or the urgency of private affairs, occasions frequent journeys, and with the exception of a few hardy individuals, who actually appear to take root in the soil to which they have been transplanted in early youth, a propensity to rove seems to characterize the whole body of Anglo-Indians.

The three modes of travelling in India are, by *dák* (post), by marching, and by water in a pin-nace or budgerow. The cold season is the only period of the year in which a march can be performed without great inconvenience. The rains offer the most favourable time for a voyage, the rivers being very low in the dry weather, while it is generally practicable to travel by *dák*, except when the country is completely under water, in which case this method is subject to much discomfort and considerable delay. In a *dák* journey, the traveller must apply to the postmaster of the place of his residence to furnish him with relays of bearers to a given point, a preliminary which is called "laying the *dák*:" the time of starting is specified, and the different places at which it may be expedient to rest. Three or four days' notice is usually required to enable the *dák*-master to apprise the public functionaries of the different villages of the demand for bearers: the traveller must be provided with his own palanquin, and his own *banghies* (boxes), ropes, and bamboos.

Will it be necessary, in these enlightened times, to describe a palanquin? It would be an affront to the reading public to suppose it ignorant of the shape and construction of the conveyances employed

in Lapland, Greenland, Kamschatka, or Timbuctoo, but it is content with very superficial information respecting the East-Indies, which usually presents itself to the mind in an indistinct and gorgeous vision, seas of gold and minarets of pearl, or shining in all the variegated hues of Aladdin's gem-decked garden. Some writer of an Eastern tale, in an Annual, has represented a native prince travelling with his daughter in her magnificent palanquin, a vehicle in which there is scanty accommodation for one, even when formed upon the most roomy plan.

An oblong chest will convey the truest idea which can be given of this conveyance; the walls are of double canvas, painted and varnished on the outside, and lined within with chintz or silk; it is furnished on either side with sliding wooden doors, fitted into grooves, and when unclosed disappearing between the canvas walls; the roof projects about an inch all round, and is sometimes double, to keep off the heat of the sun. In front, there are two small windows furnished with blinds, and beneath them run a shelf and a shallow drawer. The bottom is made of split cane interwoven like that of a chair, and having a mattrass, a bolster, and pillow covered either with leather or chintz: some are also

supplied with a moveable support for the back, in case the traveller should prefer sitting upright to reclining at full length. The poles jet out at each end near the top; they are slightly curved, and each is long enough to rest upon the shoulders of two men, who stand one on each side, shifting their shoulders as they run along. Could the palanquin be constructed to swing upon springs, no conveyance would be more easy and agreeable; but mechanical art has made little progress in India; no method has yet been struck out to prevent the vehicle from jolting. It is said that the pendulous motion, which would be the least unpleasant to the traveller, would distress the bearers; but when the makers shall be men of science, this difficulty will vanish.

The preparations for a *dák* journey are simple. The necessary baggage is packed into *petarrahs* or *banghies*, which are sometimes square tin boxes of a particular size, fitted for the mode of conveyance with conical tops; at others, round covered baskets sewed up in painted canvas. These are slung with ropes to each end of a bamboo, which is carried across a man's shoulder, two *banghie*-bearers being usually attached to the *dák*. A desk may be placed upon the shelf before-mentioned, and other small

packages stowed in the palanquin, which should be supplied with biscuits, a tumbler, a bottle of wine or brandy, and a *serai* (a long-necked porous jar) of water wrapped in a wet cloth, which may be tied to one of the poles outside. Eight men attend to carry the palanquin, who relieve each other by turns, the four off duty running by the side of the vehicle. At night, two *mussaulchees* (torch-bearers) are added. These men are all Hindoos, and belong to one of the poorest, though not the lowest castes; they bring with them their cloths, *lotas* (drinking-vessels), and provision for a meal, which they pack upon the top of the palanquin, and retaining a very scanty portion of drapery upon their persons, present an exceedingly grotesque appearance. When all is ready, they take up their burthen and set off at a round pace, going, when the road is good, at the rate of from three miles and a-half to four miles an hour.

The stages vary from ten to fourteen miles, and a change of bearers is often effected in the midst of a wide plain. The relay, which is generally in waiting for some time, kindle a fire, groupe themselves around it, and beguile the interval with smoking or sleeping. When drawing near to the appointed spot, the traveller is made aware of the

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circumstance by the shouts of his own people, who exclaim, in loud but musical accents, "*dák wallah, dák wallah, tiar hi?*" (*dák* men or fellows, are you ready?) The welcome response is joyfully received, and in a few minutes more the palanquin is put down amid the cries of "*Ram! Ram!*"* an expression which, when thus used, conveys both salutation and thankfulness. The tired traveller will often echo the "*Ram! Ram!*" of his weary bearers, who, if they have received the customary *buries* (present) of an eight-anna piece, take leave with shouts of "*salaam, Saib.*"

In preparing for a *dák* journey, care should be taken to secure a halt of eight or twelve hours, at stated distances, certainly not exceeding a hundred miles, while a lady will find it expedient to rest after she has traversed fifty or sixty. On the great road, from Calcutta to Cawnpore, there are government-bungalows at the end of every stage, built purposely for the accommodation of travellers; but on other routes, they must depend upon the hospitality of individuals. It can always be previously ascertained when and where it may be advisable to rest, and notices to the persons whose houses lie in

* A contraction of *Rama*, one of the numerous gods of the Hindu mythology.

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the road can be conveyed at the time that the bearers are summoned, though in no instance would a *dák* traveller be refused admittance, and it is only necessary to go up to the gate and ask for shelter.

In the hot season, persons who brave the heat of the day in a palanquin, venture at the risk of their lives: they should always take care to be housed by twelve o'clock. Not a few, who have unadvisedly set out upon a long journey without the necessary precaution of breaking it by remaining under some friendly roof during the sultry hours, have been found dead in their palanquins, and others have escaped with very severe fevers. In the cold weather, it is more agreeable to travel by day, the nights being very piercing. As the doors can only be partially open until after sunset, very little of the country is to be seen from a palanquin; however, the eye may still find amusement in contemplating the passing objects, and, particularly in Bengal, the gambols of the monkeys crashing amid the boughs of the trees above, and the fire-flies irradiating the leaves of whole groves, shooting in and out in coruscations of emerald light, afford gratification to those who are willing to be amused.

A journey by *dák* is the only rapid method of travelling which has yet been devised in India, and the rate, compared with that in European countries, is slow indeed. It is also very expensive if the distance be long, the charge made by the postmaster being a shilling per mile. There is likewise a demand for a deposit, under the name of demurrage, which the traveller forfeits should he detain the bearers in places not specified in the route.

The *dák* traveller experiences considerable inconvenience in being deprived of the attendance of his own servants, who must follow in a much more tedious manner. While actually upon the road, the want of domestics is not felt, the bearers being particularly attentive to the comforts of the traveller: even persons unacquainted with Hindostanee may trust themselves to a long journey, secure that the different sets of natives, who may be employed to carry them, will endeavour, with the most earnest zeal, to comprehend and obey their commands.* On one occasion, a lady, who did not know ten words of the language, obtained a very

* A very few words will suffice to carry a *dák* traveller over India. *Ootow* (lift up), *jeldie jow* (quickly go), *pin-nakee panoe low* (drinking water bring); and in answer to all questions, *dustoor ca maffie* (do according to custom).

comfortable breakfast by pointing to a bottle of tea which she had with her in the palanquin, and making the bearers understand that she wished to have it heated. They kindled a fire, warmed the tea in an earthen pipkin purchased for the purpose, and catching a goat presented her with a tumbler-full of its milk. The place selected for the *déjeuné* gave evidence of their good taste: they put the palanquin down under a cluster of trees which crowned a slight elevation in the road; a few Moosulmanee tombs lay scattered around, with a well in the distance, whence groupes of females, bearing the graceful *gurrah* on their heads, passed to and fro from the neighbouring village.

In most cases where complaints are made of the bearers, the fault, upon investigation, will be found to lie with the traveller. Raw young men, and sometimes even those who have not the excuse of youth and inexperience, are but too apt to amuse themselves by playing tricks with, or beating, their luckless bearers, who are not unfrequently treated like beasts of burthen. They have it in their power to retaliate, and when provoked to excess, punish the offender, by putting the palanquin down, and making off to the jungles. A three or four hours' detention upon the road, perhaps under a burning

sun, is the consequence, and it would require a very vivid imagination to conceive a more disagreeable situation, especially to a person wholly unacquainted with the country, and the means of procuring a new set of bearers to carry him on. The chance of falling in with a European is very small indeed, and few of the passers-by would consider it to be their duty to offer their assistance. Natives do not trouble themselves about the affairs of strangers, and they would consider it to be the will of heaven that a Saib should lie upon the road, and would not think of interfering unless especially called upon to do so. As there is only one particular caste who will carry burthens upon their shoulders, the palanquin would remain in a quiescent state for ever, before men who were not bearers by birth and profession would lift it from the ground: they would ejaculate upon being hailed, and pass on, confining their services to the report of the affair to the *cutwal* or *jemadar* of a neighbouring village, who would send bearers if they could be procured, which is not always the case under several hours' notice.

It happened to the writer that, upon a *dák* journey, the *bhangie* ropes broke, and were useless. The *bhangie*-bearers could not be prevailed upon

to carry the boxes on their heads, and at every stage a considerable delay took place in procuring *coolies* to convey a burthen rejected by persons belonging to a different class. *Sirdar*-bearers, *chuprassies*, &c. will carry a *guttrie*, or bundle, but will upon no account submit to the disgrace of a box. They sometimes insist upon taking out a crape or gauze dress, and wrapping it in a towel, to the utter destruction of its furbelows; and many are the lively discussions which occur between them and the *ayah* upon these occasions.

But to return to the discomforts of a *dák* journey. Policy as well as humanity should teach Europeans to treat the natives of India with kindness; they have frequently the power (though, to their credit be it spoken, they rarely avail themselves of it) of avenging their injuries, and the advantages of a good name can in no country be of higher value. The *bhote utcha Saib*, or the *bhote utcha Bebee*, who have procured the commendations of the natives around them, will find their fame very widely extended. They are secure of meeting respect and attention wheresoever they may go, while those of a contrary character are equally certain of being shunned by all who are not actually compelled to render them unwilling service.

The repose obtained in a palanquin is liable to many interruptions; at the end of each stage there is the clamour for *buaries*, and when the vehicle gets into the hands of a set of bearers who are either ill-matched in size, or who do not step out well together, the jolting is tremendous.

The pleasantest period of the year for *dák* travelling is immediately after the breaking up of the rains, when the waters have subsided, but the earth remains moist and free from dust. The sun is then not too oppressive to be borne during the day, and the nights are cool without being chilling. Unfortunately, the season for these enjoyments is very transient; at the expiration of a month, the dust and the cold become extremely disagreeable, the wind whistles through the palanquin, and at night blankets are necessary to guard the person from the frosty air. A *dák* journey in the rains is attended with many difficulties and some dangers; but if the palanquin can be kept dry, the fatigue and annoyance are confined to the bearers, for the individual who is conveyed sees the country to the greatest advantage. The charms of a cloudy sky can only be truly estimated by those who have lived under sunshine and glare until they are nearly blinded. The palanquin-doors may be thrown open, and the

various beauties of the jungles display themselves to view ; every spot is covered with the richest verdure, and creepers of luxuriant growth, studded with myriads of stars, fling their bright festoons from tree to tree. Those beautiful little mosques and pagodas, which in every part of India embellish the landscape, look like gems as they rise from the soft green turf which surrounds them ; and the traveller who has passed, in a less propitious season, over an arid tract of sand, would scarcely, save for these landmarks, be able to recognize the country, so changed does it appear. An enchanter's wand has been over it, and laughing meads and valleys green are substituted for burning wastes, where not a single floweret deigned to grow.

The floods, though rather too abundant for comfort, are exceedingly picturesque ; all the low grounds are inundated, and the bearers are obliged to wade, sometimes knee-deep, and at others up to their waists, in water. In dangerous passes, they are compelled to raise the palanquin upon their heads, and the utmost vigilance is necessary to secure the live cargo from a ducking. The men proceed cautiously, for a single false step, or an unexpected plunge of the foot into a hole, would occasion a serious upset. But such accidents rarely

occur ; the *mussaulchees*, in places where the flood is deep, precede the palanquin, and the bearers follow in the track which they have found to be safe, while the four off duty assist their comrades by giving each a hand : this is also done when the roads are very slippery, and the palanquin, literally handed along like a lady, would present a very ridiculous spectacle to a person unacquainted with the necessity of the case. The traveller is, however, little inclined to laugh at the droll appearance which his equipage affords, for it is rather a nervous thing to calculate the chances of a dipping, while making a slow progress through apparently interminable sheets of water, rising within half an inch of the floor of the palanquin, where one of those little tilts which so frequently occur unheeded on dry ground, would inevitably ship a sea, the consequences of which might be, in addition to the discomfort of wet clothes, a serious attack of fever and ague.

The country during the rainy season is intersected by *nullahs*; the floods convert every channel of the ravines into a rapid river, and the greater number being unfordable, they must be crossed in boats. Ferries are established upon the principal thoroughfares, and there is usually a group of natives as-

sembled on the bank. Time does not appear to be of the slightest value to the people of Hindostan; they will wait for days together at an unfrequented ghaut for the chance of getting a free passage, in a boat engaged by some more wealthy traveller, rather than pay the few pice demanded for their transport. The instant the palanquin is safely lodged in the boat, the crowd upon the bank embark, and if the owner should be so rash as to ask for his fee, the intruders enquire with great indignation if he be not satisfied with the *burra buxies* (great present) he has already received, declaring to a man that, after the Saib's extraordinary liberality, they will give him nothing: the boat belonged to the Saib, to whom their thanks are due. Apparently, this reasoning is conclusive; at least the boatman takes nothing by his motion.

The *jheels*, which sometimes assume the appearance of large lakes, are crossed with more trouble and difficulty. They are too extensive to be skirted, and are seldom provided with a boat. A raft is the substitute, and that is usually of the frailest description; a few bamboos are tied together, covered with grass, and floated upon *kedgerees* pots, with their mouths downwards. At night, the passage of one these *jheels* is really terrific, and

might be seriously alarming to a person of a timid disposition.

The writer retains a very vivid recollection of the wild and almost awful scene, which presented itself upon crossing a *jheel* of very considerable dimensions, in a *dák* journey undertaken during a season of heavy rain. Fortunately, though new to the country, both her companion and herself reposed perfect confidence in the resources of the natives, and, satisfied that every care would be taken of them, submitted themselves entirely to the direction of their conductors. In consequence of the state of the roads, and the difficulties which two ladies might experience in traversing a country by night, flooded in every direction, the judge of the district had directed the attendance of a *chuprassee*, who with the bearers was relieved at every stage. The presence of this person certainly gave additional security to the party, who, divested of fear, lost the sense of discomfort in the novelty of the situation. The night was as dark as a romance-writer of the Radcliffe school could desire; not a single star was to be seen along the murky sky, and, black as Erebus, a dismal waste of waters stretched its pitchy waves as far as the eye could reach. A lurid light moved along the surface of this truly

Stygian lake,—the torch of a *mussaulchee*, who ventured over, up to his neck in water; this red speck settled into a point at a considerable distance, and in a short time, a large, nondescript, funereal object was dimly descried moving across. The travellers were then civilly requested to leave their palanquins, and found better accommodation than they had expected upon a *charpoy* or bedstead, which had been brought down to the edge of the water for them to sit on.

While watching the progress of the palanquins, which were taken over one at a time, the raft not being strong enough to bear them both at once, there was ample opportunity to contemplate the landscape. It was darkness made visible by the red glare of a few torches, which gave indistinct glimpses of the surrounding objects; sometimes they threw their waving flames upon the swart faces of a wild groupe, apparently struggling in the water, round the shapeless raft,—fiendish forms, well-suited to the murky depths whence they seemed to have emerged from abysses still more fearful. At length the floating mass a third time approached the shore, and half a dozen men, taking up the *charpoy*, carried it a few yards into the water. The side of the raft being obtained, the passengers were

placed upon it, and they found themselves fairly launched on a sea of sable hue; blackness was above, around, below, and should any accident occur to the slight vessel, if such it might be called, which bore them on, there would be little chance of a rescue from the dingy flood. The passage was fortunately achieved in safety, and most gladly did they quit their damp couch upon the wet grass for their comfortable palanquins, whence they cast a parting glance upon the dreary expanse they were leaving behind. After an absence of eight months, the travellers returned; not a single vestige remained of the lake of the dismal swamp, which had been transformed into a basin of deep sand, bare, barren, and thirsty. The *nullahs* also were dry, the grass had disappeared, and with it nature's loveliest charms.

It is only when night spreads its mysterious spell over the scene, that an Indian landscape, during the dry weather, can captivate the eye, however luxuriant the foliage may be, and that never appears to be scorched by the sun. However romantic the temples, more than half their charm is lost when they spring from an arid soil; but starlight or moonlight can invest them with a divine aspect: the barren sands become soft

and silvery ; and the parched desert, cool and refreshed, cheats the vision with a semblance of verdure. To a *dák* traveller, the changes produced by the approach of night are particularly striking : his eyes have been wearied for many hours with dust and glare, and he hails the first shadows cast by the setting sun with joy. So extraordinary is the illusion, that it would not be difficult to fancy that he was entering upon some new country ; some enchanting paradise hitherto undiscovered, whence all unsightly things have been banished, or where they never found a place. An Indian night is superb ; excepting at intervals during the rains, it is always light enough to distinguish objects at a considerable distance ; the heavens shine with stars, and the moonlight descends in floods. Beneath the midnight planetary beam, the most simple and unpretending building is decked with beauty ; the mud hut of some poor native, with its coarse drapery of climbing gourds, shews like a fairy bower, and the barest sand-bank, topped with the wretched habitations of humble villagers, assumes a romantic appearance, outlined against the dark blue sky spangled with innumerable stars.

The stately elephant never attains so grand and imposing an attitude as at night ; pacing singly

over the plain, his crimson trappings gleaming in the starlight, he is far more majestic than under any other circumstances, and when three or four are seen in a bivouac together, they look like masses of black marble; some huge monumental effigy sacred to the departed genii of the land. A well, a *kafila*, with its sleeping bullocks stretching their weary limbs around their burthens, or an express camel suddenly emerging from the shade, and striding again into darkness, fill the mind with pleasing images. Daylight dissolves the spell; squalid objects re-appear; dust and dilapidation abound amid the dwellings of man; the too glorious sunshine envelopes the distant scene in a dazzling veil, and the only resource is to shut up the doors of the palanquin, and endeavour to bear the heat and the dust with patience. During the hot winds, both are dreadful throughout the day, and nothing save the most extraordinary exigence, should induce an European to expose himself to the sultry atmosphere around.

Attempts are made to cool the palanquins by means of tattees, an expedient which materially heightens the expense of travelling, as (*bheestees* must be engaged to supply water) and which frequently fails in the desired object. The air is

CHAPTER IX.

BENARES.

THE holy city of Benares, the seat of Hindu superstition, is not more remarkable for its antiquities, and the sanctity with which it has been invested by the bigoted worshippers of Brahma, than for the singularity of its structure, its vast wealth, and immense population. It stands upon the left bank of the Ganges, stretching several miles along the shore; the river is about thirty feet below the level of the houses, and is attained by numerous ghauts, which spread their broad steps between fantastic buildings of the most grotesque and curious description. The confused masses of stone, which crowd upon each other in this closely-built city, sometimes present fronts so bare and lofty, as to convey the idea of a prison or fortress. Others are broken into diminutive pagodas, backed by tall mansions seven stories in height, and interspersed with Gothic gateways, towers, and arches, (all profusely covered with ornaments,) balconies, verandahs, battlements, mullioned windows, balus-

trades, turrets, cupolas, and round and pointed domes, the fancies of all ages. Since the conquest of the city by Arungzebe, Moosulman architecture has reared its light and elegant erections amid the more heavy and less tasteful structures of Hindu creation. From a mosque, built upon the ruins of a heathen temple, spring those celebrated minarets, which now rank amid the wonders of the city. Their lofty spires shoot up into the golden sky from a dense cluster of buildings, crowning the barbaric pomp below with graceful beauty.

Notwithstanding its great antiquity, and the immense sums lavished upon its pagodas, Benares does not boast a single specimen of those magnificent temples which, in other parts of India, convey so grand an idea of the vast conceptions of their founders. Here are no pyramidal masses of fretted stone, no huge conical mounds of solid masonry standing alone to astonish the eye, as at Bindrabund; no gigantic tower like the Cootub Minar at Delhi, to fill the imagination with awe and wonder; but the whole of this enormous city is composed of details, intermingled with each other without plan or design, yet forming altogether an architectural display of the most striking and imposing nature. Amid much that is strange and

fantastic, there are numerous specimens of a pure and elegant taste, and the small antique pagodas, which abound in every direction, are astonishingly beautiful. The lavish ornaments of richly-sculptured stone, with which they are profusely adorned, give evidence of the skill and talent of the artists of their day, and throughout the whole of the city a better taste is displayed in the embellishments of the houses than is usually found in the private buildings of India. There are fewer elephants of clay, and misshapen camels, with round towers of tile upon their backs, stuck upon the projecting cornices of the habitations of the middling classes. The florid ornaments of wood and stone profusely spread over the fronts of the dwelling-houses, bring to the mind recollections of Venice, which Benares resembles in some other particulars ; one or two of the lofty narrow streets being connected by covered passages not very unlike the far-famed Bridge of Sighs.

The views of Benares from the river are exceedingly fine, offering an infinite and untiring variety of scenery, of which the effect is greatly heightened by the number of trees, whose luxuriant foliage intermingles with the parapets and buttresses of the adjacent buildings. In dropping down the stream

in a boat, an almost endless succession of interesting objects is presented to the eye. Through the interstices between tower and palace, temple and serai, glimpses are caught of gardens and bazaars stretching inland; an open gate displays the terraced court of some wealthy noble; long cloistered corridors lead to the secluded recesses of the zenana, and small projecting turrets, perched upon the lofty battlements of some high and frowning building, look like the watch-towers of a feudal castle. The ghauts are literally swarming with life at all hours of the day, and every creek and jetty are crowded with craft of various descriptions, all truly picturesque in their form and effect. A dozen budge-rows are moored in one place; the light *bohlio* dances on the rippling current at another: a splendid pinnacle rears its gaily-decorated masts at a third: while large *patalas*, and other clumsy native vessels, laden with cotton or some equally cumbrous cargo, choke up the river near some well-frequented wharf. Small fairy shallops are perpetually skimming over the surface of the glittering stream, and sails, some white and dazzling, others of a deep saffron hue, and many made up of tattered fragments which bear testimony to many a heavy squall, appear in all directions.

No written description, however elaborate, can convey even a faint idea of the extraordinary peculiarities of a place which has no prototype in the East. Though strictly oriental, it differs very widely from all the other cities of Hindostan, and it is only by pictorial representations that any adequate notion can be formed of the mixture of the beautiful and the grotesque, which, piled confusedly together, form that stupendous wall which spreads along the bank of the Ganges at Benares. It is much to be lamented that no panoramic view has ever been exhibited of this singular place, and still more so that the exquisitely-faithful delineations of Mr. Daniell, an artist so long and so actively employed in portraying the wonders of nature and of art in India, should not be in every body's hands. His portfolios are rich in specimens of Benares, and the engravings from his works, executed under his own eye, retain all those delicate touches which are so necessary to preserve the oriental character of the original sketches. Drawings made in India, and sent to England to be engraved, are subject to much deterioration in the process, from the negligence of persons, wholly unacquainted with the peculiarities of the country, to whom they are entrusted, and many of the cheap

productions of this class, from the pencils of very able amateur artists, are rendered almost worthless by the ignorance and inaccuracy of those persons who are employed to prepare them for the engraver.

Writers upon India have frequently occasion to express their surprise at the extreme carelessness and indifference which prevail in England concerning those magnificent realms whence, in other days, the whole of Europe derived its improvements in arts and arms ; but in no instance can their astonishment be more highly raised than by the sight of the numerous and interesting sketches, which Mr. Daniell has not yet been encouraged to give to the public.

Few Europeans have ever been tempted to take up their abode in the close and crowded city of Benares ; the military and civil station is about two miles distant, and is called, in Government Orders and other official documents, Secrole ; this name is, however, seldom used by the inhabitants, and few ever talk of Secrole as their destination, Benares being by far the most common and popular term. The garrison, consisting of about three native regiments, and a small train of artillery, is under the command of a major-general ; and at the distance of a few miles, at Sultanpore, a na-

tive cavalry corps is stationed. The civil appointments are very numerous and splendid, and Secrole possesses some of the finest and best-appointed mansions in India: formerly the establishment of a mint added to the number of European inhabitants; but its abolition, which took place a few years ago, is now very severely felt by those who remember the talent and intelligence connected with it in the days of Anglo-Indian splendour. The usual amusements of a Mofussil station,—balls, private theatricals, dinners, morning calls, and scandal, are diversified by occasional visits to the city. Few of the numerous travellers who pass through the district are so totally destitute of curiosity as not to feel desirous to penetrate into the interior of a place so widely celebrated. The ascents of the minarets is a feat of which people like to boast, who care very little for the view which is to be obtained from them, and consequently, excursions to the holy city take place very frequently.

There is nothing either striking or beautiful in the environs of Benares; the cantonments do not possess any remarkable feature to distinguish them from other military stations; they are flat and destitute of views, but are redeemed from positive ugliness by the groves with which they are sur-

rounded. Immediately beyond the military lines, the tract towards the city becomes interesting; several very handsome Moosulman tombs shew the vast increase of the followers of a foreign creed in the sacred birth-place of Brahma, and the desecration of this holy spot is made still more apparent by the carcasses of animals hung up, in defiance of the brahmins, in butchers' shops. Formerly none save human sacrifices were tolerated, and upon the first occupation of Benares by the British it was thought advisable to refrain from slaughtering bullocks and calves: beef and veal are now to be had in abundance, and the Hindoos, if not reconciled, have become accustomed to the murders committed upon the peculiar favourites of the priesthood. A long straggling suburb, composed of houses of singular construction, in every stage of dilapidation, rendered exceedingly picturesque by intervening trees and flowering shrubs, leads to the gate of the city; and a short and rather wide avenue brings the visitor to the *chokey*, a large irregular square. From this point vehicles of European construction are useless, and the party must either mount upon elephants, dispose themselves in *ton jauns*, or proceed on foot; and very early in the morning, before the population of this

crowded city is astir, the latter affords by far the best method of visiting the temples; but the instant that the tide of human beings has poured itself into the narrow avenues, it is expedient to be removed from actual contact with the thickly-gathering throng.

Benares, at day-break, presents less of animated life than any other city of the same magnitude and extent: a few sweepers only appear in the streets; all the houses are shut up, and give no sign of the multitudes who swarm within. The shops are closely barricaded, the usual mode of fastening them being by a strong chain attached by a large padlock to a staple beneath the threshold. At this early hour, the streets are very clean, and the air of the city is much cooler and fresher than might be expected from its denseness and population. Its zoological inhabitants are up and abroad with the first gleam of the sun; the brahminee bulls perambulate the streets, monkeys spring from cornice to cornice, and flights of pigeons and paroquets dart from the parapets in every direction. As soon as it is broad day, the priests repair to the temples, and devotees are seen conveying the sacred water from the Ganges to the several shrines. At the doors of the pagodas, per-

sons are stationed with baskets of flowers for sale. Long rosaries of scarlet, white, or yellow blossoms, seem to be in the greatest request, and are purchased by the pious as offerings to their gods: the pavements of the temples are strewn with these floral treasures, the only pleasing ceremonial connected with Hindoo worship. The too-abundant supply of water, the dirty throng of religious beggars, and the incessant vociferations of "Ram ! Ram !" compel all save determined antiquaries to make a speedy exit from the noise and crowd of these places.

The observatory and the minarets are the principal objects of attraction to parties who merely desire to see the *lions* of Benares ; but, in proceeding thither, visitors who take an interest in the homely occupations of the native traders, may be amused by the opening of the shops, and the commencement of the stir, bustle, and traffic, which at ten o'clock will have reached its climax. The rich merchandize with which the city abounds, according to the custom of Hindostan, is carefully concealed from the view of passengers ; but in the tailors' shops, some of the costly products of the neighbouring countries are exhibited. Those skilful artists, who can repair a rent with invisible

stitches, sit in groups, employed in mending superb shawls, which, after having passed through their practised hands, will sell, to inexperienced purchasers, for new ones fresh from the looms of Thibet. The shops of the copper-smiths make the most show; they are gaily set out with brass and copper vessels of various kinds, some intended for domestic use, and others for that of the temples.

In every street, a shroff or banker may be seen, seated behind a pile of cowries, with bags of silver and copper at his elbow. These men make considerable sums in the course of the day, by changing specie; they deduct a per-centage from every rupee, and are notorious usurers, lending out their money at enormous interest. Here too are confectioners, surrounded by the common sweetmeats which are so much in request, and not unfrequently employed in the manufacture of their sugar-cakes. In an iron kettle, placed over a charcoal fire, the syrup is boiling; the contents are occasionally stirred with an iron ladle, and when the mixture is "thick and slab," and has imbibed a due proportion of the dust which rises in clouds from the well-trodden street, ladle-fulls are poured upon an iron plate which covers a charcoal stove, whence, when sufficiently baked, they

are removed to their places on the counter or platform, on which the whole process is conducted. Those dainty cook-shops, so temptingly described in the *Arabian Nights*, decked with clean white cloths, and furnished with delicate cream tarts, with or without pepper, are not to be seen in India; yet the tables of the Hindoos, though more simple than those of the luxurious Moosulmans, are not destitute of richly-seasoned viands, and the finer sort of confections.

The dyers, punkah-makers, and several others, also carry on their respective occupations in their open shops; the houses of the former are distinguished by long pieces of gaily-coloured cloths, hung across projecting poles. In these, the bright red of the Indian rose, and the superb yellow, the bridal colour of the Hindoos, are the most conspicuous; they likewise produce brilliant greens and rich blues, which, when formed into turbans and cummerbunds, very agreeably diversify the white dresses of an Indian crowd.

Learning, as well as religion, still flourishes in Benares; but both have degenerated since the Moslem conquest. The brahmins of the Hindoo college, once so celebrated for its pundits, are not so well skilled in Sanscrit as might have been

expected from the great encouragement afforded to the institution by the British Government. The best scholars are now to be found amid the Anglo-Indian community. It is said that a former secretary of the college, an appointment always given to an European officer in the Company's service, lost his life in consequence of the jealousy entertained by the brahmins of his superior learning. He had succeeded in unravelling a part of an inscription belonging to a very ancient Hindoo temple at some distance from the city. His zeal and assiduity in the cause induced him to return to the labour again; but he died suddenly, ere he had completed a task which had baffled all his predecessors, and which had been pronounced to be utterly hopeless by the most erudite members of the college. In all probability, this gifted person fell a sacrifice to a jungle-fever, brought on by over-exertion and exposure to malaria; and the current report of his being poisoned by the brahmin of the temple, at the suggestion of his brethren of Benares, is merely recorded in this paper as a proof of the extraordinary celebrity which was supposed to have led to so fatal a catastrophe.

The observatory, though abandoned by its magi, still remains, a gigantic relic of the zeal in the

pursuit of science manifested in former days. The discoveries of modern times, adopted, though slowly, by eastern astronomers, have rendered it of little value for the purpose for which it was intended, and it has fallen into neglect and disuse, being no longer patronized by the native prince, who, until very lately, kept up an establishment there at his own expense. An extensive area, entered from the street, is divided into several small quadrangles, surrounded by cloisters, and forming cool and shady retreats, intended for the residences of those sages who studied the wonders of the firmament from the platform of the tower above. Broad flights of stairs lead to the summit of this huge, square, massive building, a terraced height well suited to the watchers of the stars, and which, at the time of its erection, was furnished with an apparatus very creditable to the state of science at that early period. The astrologer no longer takes his nightly stand on the lonely tower, reading the destinies of man in the bright book of the heavens, or calculating those eclipses which he imagined to be caused by the attacks of some malignant demon, anxiously endeavouring to extinguish the lights of the world : a belief which still prevails throughout India. Notwithstanding the repeated victories

achieved by the sun and moon, the Hindoo population, at every new eclipse, are seized with horror and consternation ; they assemble in great multitudes at the ghauts, and attempt to frighten and drive away the evil spirit by sounding all sorts of discordant instruments, and keeping up an incessant clamour of the most frightful cries. Such is the confusion and terror which fill the breasts of the crowd, that the military and civil authorities are compelled to take active measures for the prevention of accidents and the suppression of tumults, which this dangerous state of excitement is too apt to occasion.

The view which the observatory commands is limited to the river and the country on the opposite bank ; but a far more extensive prospect is obtained from the minarets. Adventurous persons, who have climbed to the light cupolas which crown these lofty spires, see the city of Benares under an entirely new aspect in this bird's-eye view. They perceive that there are wide spaces between the seven-storied buildings that form a labyrinth of lanes, and that gay gardens flourish in the midst of dense masses of brick and mortar. The hum of the busy multitude below is scarcely heard, and they look down upon flocks of paroquets skimming through the

golden air at a considerable distance beneath. The palaces of the city, in all their varied styles of architecture, appear to great advantage from these heights. Gothic towers open upon luxuriant parterres, affording a more pleasing idea of the seclusion to which the ladies of the city are doomed, than those high, narrow houses, wedged closely against each other, where from the roof alone glimpses may be caught of living trees, where flowers withering in pots convey the only notion which the imprisoned females can obtain of the beauties of nature. Overtopped by some still more lofty mansion, or perhaps debarred from egress to a spot whence they may be descried by a prying neighbour, they grow up in total ignorance of the most common objects around them, and wear out their existence in dull monotony, enlivened only by the gossip of some privileged old woman, who carries news and scandal from house to house.

The usual style of building in Benares ensures the strictest privacy to the female portion of the family. The massy door from the street opens into a small court-yard, surrounded on all sides by high walls ; one large apartment occupies the whole of the front, in every story ; these rooms, which are airy and well supplied with windows and verandahs

overlooking the street, are exclusively occupied by the gentlemen of the house. On each floor, a covered gallery runs round three sides of the courtyard, leading to small chambers, or rather cells, where the women and their attendants are immured. They have no outlet whatever to the street, and look down either upon a pretty fountain, where the quadrangle below is neatly kept, or upon the goats and cows which frequently occupy the ground-floor. Some of the interiors of these houses are richly decorated with carved wood highly polished. In the cold season, costly carpets are spread over the floors; and the *pāān* boxes, and other vessels in daily use, are of silver beautifully wrought.

Many of the inhabitants are extremely rich; and besides its native population, Benares is the occasional residence of distinguished strangers from all parts of the peninsula. A great number of Hindoo princes and nobles possess mansions in the holy city; it is the asylum of deposed or abdicated monarchs; the refuge of rebels and usurpers; and wealthy devotees from distant places retire to draw their last breath within the sacred precincts, where all who are so fortunate as to die in the good graces of the brahmins, are sure of going straight to heaven, even though they may have eaten beef. Poorer

pilgrims flock from every corner of Hindostan, anxious to perform their ablutions in a spot held sacred by all castes, who believe it to be a creation of the gods, distinct from the rest of the world, formed of unpolluted earth, and resting upon the point of Siva's trident. In spite of the desecrations of the Moosulmauns, it still retains its holy character ; but since the Moghul conquest, the religious ceremonies have lost somewhat of their revolting barbarity. Human victims have for a considerable period ceased to bleed upon the altars, and by a late edict of the British Government, the cremation of widows, a spectacle which occurred more frequently at Benares than in any other part of the Company's territories, is no longer permitted.

The ladies, it is said, complain very bitterly of the hardship of being prevented from burning, and perhaps in many instances it may be severely felt ; for women, brought up in a state of apathetic luxury, are ill calculated to endure the penances and privations which must be the lot of those who are so unfortunate as to survive their husbands. It is reckoned very discreditable for a woman to appear plump and healthy at the end of her first year of mourning ; it is expected that she shall be reduced by long and frequent fasts, and in her, the

outward signs of woe are to be shewn in an emaciated frame and premature old age ; she is forbidden the luxuries of dress, and must perform servile offices revolting to a woman of high birth, long accustomed to the attendance of a train of dependants. Deprived of the few enjoyments which the tyranny of the customs of the East allows to its females, who, brought up in ignorance and imprisonment, should at least be secured from want and suffering, a Hindoo widow is one of the most pitable objects in the creation : it is to be hoped that the abolition of the rite of *suttee* will pave the way to more enlightened notions on the subject of female privileges, and that some adequate provision will be made by law to secure the relicts of men of wealth from being cast entirely upon the mercy of their relations.

The commerce of Benares is in a very flourishing condition ; besides the extensive traffic which the merchants of the city carry on in shawls, diamonds, and other precious articles, numbers are engaged in the manufacture and sale of the celebrated gold and silver brocades which are known in India by the name of *kincob*. These costly tissues are worn as gala dresses by all the wealthy classes of Hindostan, whether Moslem or Hindoo ; they have not

been superseded, like the calicoes and muslins of native looms, by European goods of a similar description, and even the magic power of machinery may be defied by the artizan who weaves his splendid web of silk and silver, after the methods taught by his forefathers, in the secluded factories of Benares. Scarfs of gold and silver stuff, called Benares turbans, with deep fringed borders beautifully wrought, and resembling a rich setting of gems, have found their way to the shops of London, and are much esteemed for the peculiar brilliance of their materials; but these do not equal in beauty the embroidery of the native *puggree*, or turban, upon velvet; these superb head-dresses look like clusters of precious stones, and a handsome well-proportioned native, attired in a vest and trowsers of crimson and gold brocade, a cummerbund, composed of a Cashmere shawl, wound round his waist, a second shawl thrown over one shoulder, and the belt of his scimitar and the studs of his robe sparkling with diamonds, may challenge the world to produce a more tasteful and magnificent costume. Nobles clad in this glittering array, and mounted upon chargers decked with trappings of solid silver, often flash like meteors through the square of the city, and sometimes the accidental opening of the curtain

of a native palanquin will reveal a still brighter vision,—a lady reclining on the cushions, covered with jewels.

Silver and gold lace, of every kind and pattern, fringes, scalloped trimmings, edgings, and borders of all widths, are to be purchased at Benares exceedingly cheap, when compared to the prices demanded for such articles in Europe; but the Anglo-Indian ladies rarely avail themselves of these glittering bargains, excepting when fancy balls are on the *tapis*, as there is a prejudice against the adoption of decorations worn by native women. A few, however, have the good taste to prefer the Indian ornaments of goldsmith's work to trinkets of European manufacture, which, alloyed to the lowest degree of baseness, and depending solely upon some ephemeral fashion for their value, are literally not worth an eighth part of the original purchase-money; while the unrivalled workmanship of a first-rate native artizan, and the solid weight of unadulterated metal contained in the chains, necklaces, ear-rings, and bangles, which he has wrought, render them an excellent investment for floating cash, which would otherwise be expended upon trifles.

The ornaments worn by Hindostanee females are,

generally speaking, very tasteful and elegant ; the pattern of the double *joomka* ear-rings has been borrowed by European jewellers, and bracelets resembling the Indian bangle are now very common ; but the splendid necklaces, so richly carved as to glitter like precious stones, are more rarely seen ; they are formed of a series of drops beautifully wrought, and suspended from a closely-linked gold chain of exquisite workmanship. Pearls of immense size, and of the finest colour, may sometimes be purchased astonishingly cheap ; they are much worn by the natives, and strings the size of pigeons' eggs are frequently exhibited round the necks of rich men. In the cutting and setting of precious stones, the lapidaries of the East do not excel ; and it is rather difficult to ascertain the precise value of jewels which have not been committed to skilful hands. The natives are guilty of the barbarity of stringing diamonds, and shew less elegance in the disposition of gems than in any other branch of decorative art.

The rajah of Benares, a prince who, bereft of all the power exercised by his ancestors, retains his title and a revenue adequate to the support of his diminished rank, resides at Ramnaghur, a fortified palace a few miles up the river. He also possesses

a large mansion in the neighbourhood of the cantonments, built after the Anglo-Indian fashion, which he visits occasionally, and where he entertains the families of the civil and military officers of the station during the celebration of some of the most noted Hindoo festivals. The taste and courtesy of the rajah is displayed to great advantage at the *hoolee*, in which the principal diversion seems to consist in powdering the persons of all the passers-by with red dust. The showers of sugar-plums rained at the carnivals of Italy, are harmless compared to the peltings which take place on these occasions; white dresses speedily become parti-coloured, and at the conclusion, when the powder is mixed with water, every body who ventures abroad is daubed from head to foot with crimson. The Moosulman population join in the sport, and as it is a period of universal license, Europeans do not escape. Young officers are drenched from top to toe, and even ladies are not always quite secure that they shall preserve their garments unsullied. The fair guests of the rajah were therefore delighted to find that baskets of rose leaves had been substituted for the powdered *mhindee*, which is commonly used by the assailants: a costly act of gallantry, in a land where every rose is carefully

preserved for the *goulaabee paanee*,* which is consumed in vast quantities in every native house.

Indian gardeners are horrified by the wasteful manner in which European ladies are wont to gather roses: not content to take off the full blown flower close to the stem, and to tie it with a few green leaves at the end of a stick, they help themselves to a whole spray, containing perchance a dozen buds, doomed to perish untimely without yielding their exquisite breath in perfume. The knowledge of this frugal expenditure of roses furnishes a clue to the displeasure of Azor, who, in the Eastern tale, threatens the merchant with death for having dared to pluck a branch from one of his bushes, as a gift to his youngest and best-beloved daughter.

At the entertainments given by the rajah of Benares, the *nautch* is exhibited in great perfection. To European spectators, the performance soon grows exceedingly tiresome; but natives never appear to be weary of the evolutions of their favourites, and will sit with exemplary patience, from nightfall until daybreak, gazing upon the successive sets of dancers, who relieve each other throughout the night. The company assembled

* Rose water.

to witness a *nautch* occupy seats at the upper end of a large, brilliantly illuminated apartment; the sides are lined with servants, all anxious to partake of the enjoyment of the *tamasha* (shew), and other domestics are grouped at the farthest end, ready to introduce the performers. The parties, which appear in regular rotation, usually consist of seven persons; two only of these are the dancers, who advance in front of the audience, and are closely followed by three musicians, who take up their posts behind: a *mussaulchee* plants himself with his torch on either side, elevating or depressing his flambeau, according to the movements of the arms and feet of the *nautch* girls.

These ladies present very picturesque figures, though somewhat encumbered by the voluminous folds of their drapery. Their attire consists of a pair of gay-coloured silk trowsers, edged and embroidered with silver, so long as only to afford occasional glimpses of the rich anclets, strung with small bells, which encircle the legs. Their toes are covered with rings, and a broad, flat, silver chain is passed across the foot. Over the trowsers a petticoat of some rich stuff appears, containing at least twelve breadths, profusely trimmed, having broad silver or gold borders, finished with deep fringes of

the same. The *coortee*, or vest, is of the usual dimensions, but it is almost hidden by an immense veil, which crosses the bosom several times, hanging down in front and at the back in broad ends, either trimmed to match the petticoat, or composed of still more splendid materials, the rich tissues of Benares. The hands, arms, and neck, are covered with jewels, sometimes of great value, and the hair is braided with silver ribands, and confined with bodkins of beautiful workmanship. The ears are pierced round the top, and furnished with a fringe-like series of rings, in addition to the ornament worn in England: the diameter of the nose-ring is as large as that of a crown-piece; it is of gold wire, and very thin; a pearl and two other precious gems are strung upon it, dangling over the mouth, and disfiguring the countenance. With the exception of this hideous article of decoration, the dress of the *nautch* girls, when the wearers are young and handsome, and have not adopted the too prevailing custom of blackening their teeth, is not only splendid but becoming; but it requires, however, a tall and graceful figure to support the cumbrous habiliments which are worn indiscriminately by all the performers.

The *nautch* girls of India are singers as well as

dancers; they commence the vocal part of the entertainment in a high shrill key, which they sustain as long as they can; they have no idea whatsoever of modulating their voices, and the instruments which form the accompaniment are little less barbarous; these consist of two nondescript guitars, and a very small pair of kettledrums, which chime in occasionally, making sad havoc with the original melodies, some of which are sweet and plaintive. The dancing is even more strange, and less interesting than the music; the performers rarely raise their feet from the ground, but shuffle, or to use a more poetical, though not so expressive a phrase, glide along the floor, raising their arms, and veiling or unveiling as they advance or describe a circle. The same evolutions are repeated, with the most unvarying monotony, and are continued until the appearance of a new set of dancers gives a hint to the preceding party to withdraw. It is said that, on some occasions, the native spectators have been so much enraptured with the accomplishments displayed by a celebrated dancer, as to tear their clothes in extacy, and make the air resound with cries of "*wah! wah!*" but such enthusiastic demonstrations of delight are extremely rare. The gravity of the higher classes

of natives is usually exceedingly profound, and few compromise their dignity by giving loose to any emotion in public. In general, the audience maintains a steady imperturbability of countenance, the manifestations of pleasure being confined to the attendants of the dancers. The *mussaulchees*, as they brandish their torches, grin their approbation, looking unutterable things; and the musicians also, apparently in a state of enchantment, not only express their gratification by eloquent smiles, but break out into frequent exclamations of "*bhote! bhote!*" an almost untranslatable term, which is used to denominate excess of any thing.

The only novelty presented by the fresh band of dancers is the colour of the dress, or the value of the ornaments; the performances are precisely the same, European eyes and ears being unable to distinguish any superiority in the quality of the voice or the grace of the movements. By the natives, however, different dancers are held in different degrees of estimation; the celebrated Nickee, of Calcutta, has long held the rank of *prima donna* of the East. In India, a reputation once established is not endangered by a rage for novelty, or the attractions of younger candidates: fashions do not alter, new styles are not adopted,

and the singing of an angel, if differing from that of Nickee, would not be thought half so good. She has been styled the Catalani of Hindostan ; she is now the Pasta, and will be the Sontag, or the Malibran who may next arise to delight the European world. Some English singers of eminence performing at Calcutta, understanding that the king of Oude was an ardent admirer of music, travelled to Lucknow in the hope that the superior excellence of their performances would ensure them an engagement at his court. They were disappointed ; they had neither the power of lungs, nor the faculty of screaming, necessary to lap native ears in Elysium, and the experiment failed.

A *nautch* given by a great person generally concludes with an exhibition of fire-works, a spectacle in which native artists excel, and which affords a very acceptable gratification to eyes wearied with the dull sameness of the dancers. Many of the *nautch* girls are extremely rich, those most in esteem being very highly paid for their performances : the celebrated Calcutta heroine already mentioned receives 1,000 rupees (£100) nightly, wherever she is engaged. In the presence of European ladies the dancing of the *nautch* girls is dull and decorous : but when the audience is ex-

clusively masculine, it is said to assume a different character.

The rajah of Benares not only evinces his attachment to the society of the British residents in his neighbourhood, by inviting them to his own houses, but enters also into their national amusements, frequently attending the amateur performances at the theatre at Secrole. A gentleman attached to the Mint, whose loss will be long and severely felt by every branch of the community, anxious both to afford gratification to his native friends, and to increase the funds of a treasury, which in India as well as in England is seldom overflowing, was wont to take the pains to translate the drama about to be performed into Persian, and to have the MS. printed at a press which he had established. Thus made acquainted with the subject of the story, the acted play afforded amusement to many of the rich inhabitants of Benares, who subscribed very liberally to the support of the theatre. It is doubtful whether so good an example has been followed by the present management, the conciliation and gratification of the natives being too little studied in India ; but the Benares theatre is distinguished for the introduction of performances better adapted to amateur actors than

the regular drama. Charades and proverbs have diversified the usual entertainments, and the reunions, first established at this station, have become popular at Calcutta. The *tableaux vivants*, though so well suited to the peculiarities of the country, and permitting the introduction of ladies without offending prejudices, have not yet found their way to the Company's territories: so averse are the Anglo-Indians to innovations of any kind.

In no part of Hindostan can one of the most beautiful of the native festivals be seen to so great an advantage as at Benares. The *duwallee* is celebrated there with the greatest splendour, and its magnificence is heightened by the situation of the city on the bank of the river, and the singular outlines of the buildings. The attraction of this annual festival consists in the illuminations: at the close of evening, small *chirags* (earthen lamps), fed with oil which produces a brilliant white light, are placed, as closely together as possible, on every ledge of every building. Palace, temple, and tower seemed formed of stars. The city appears like the creation of the fire-king, the view from the water affording the most superb and romantic spectacle imaginable,—a scene of fairy splendour, far too brilliant for description. Europeans embark in

boats to enjoy the gorgeous pageant from the river; all the vessels are lighted up, and the buildings in the distance, covered with innumerable lamps, shine out in radiant beauty. European illuminations, with their coloured lamps, their transparencies, their crowns, stars, and initial letters, appear paltry when compared to the chaste grandeur of the Indian mode; the outlines of a whole city are marked in streams of fire, and the corruscations of light shoot up into the dark blue sky above, and tremble in long undulations on the rippling waves below. According to the native idea, every thing that prospers on the evening of the *duwallee* will be sure to prosper throughout the year. Gamblers try their luck, and if they should be successful, pursue their fortune with redoubled confidence. Thieves also, anxious to secure an abundant supply of booty, labour diligently on this evening in their vocation; while others eat, drink, and are merry, in order that they may spend the ensuing period joyously.

This festival is instituted in honour of *Luchmee*, the goddess of wealth, and those who are anxiously desirous to obtain good fortune, seek for two things on the night of its celebration: the flowers of the *goolur*, a tree which bears fruit but never blos-

soms ; and the soul of a snake, an animal which is supposed to deposit its spirit occasionally under a tree.

The Hindoo servants of an Anglo-Indian establishment, when this festival comes round, offer little presents of sweetmeats and toys to those members of the family who they think will condescend to accept them, the children and younger branches. Many of these toys are idols of various descriptions, which, before they are consecrated, may be appropriated to purposes unconnected with their original destination. Benares is particularly famous for the manufacture of wooden and earthen playthings, which are seen indiscriminately in the temples and in the hands of European children ; there are others, however, which are never used for any religious purpose, and amongst these are effigies of European ladies and gentlemen, seated upon elephants, or taking the air in buggies ; all very inferior to the Calcutta toys, which are made of paper, and which give very accurate imitations of those things which they are intended to represent : elephants, a foot high, coloured according to nature, are provided with trunks which move with every breath ; and birds in cages are suspended by such slight threads, that they appear to be alive, the most deli-

cate touch setting them in motion. The Calcutta artists are also very expert in moulding reptiles in wax, which seem to be possessed of vitality, and occasion much alarm to persons who entertain a horror of creeping things.

The whole of the Moosulmaun population are abroad to witness the superb spectacle produced by the blaze of light which flames from every Hindoo building at the *duwallee*, and the festival being one of a very peaceable description, goes off without broil or bloodshed—and what is still more extraordinary, without occasioning the conflagration of half the houses; but the brahmins have not always permitted the profanation of the holy city by the bigots of another creed, to pass unmarked by an attempt to expel the intruders. Benares has been the scene of numerous and desperate struggles between the Moslems and Hindoos. The sacred bulls have been slaughtered in the streets by the one party, and swine slain in the mosques by the other, and were it not for the extreme vigilance exercised by the British government, these mutual outrages would be continually renewed. The Jains, a peculiar sect of Hindoos, who carry their veneration for animals to a very outrageous length, have a temple at Benares, which is also

the residence of several Mahratta families, who differ from their Hindoo brethren in having refused to immure their wives and daughters, after the example of the Moslem conquerors of India. The Mahratta ladies enjoy perfect freedom in their own country, and though they may not shock the prejudices of the citizens of Benares by appearing publicly in the streets, they look out from their terraces and house-tops unveiled, not even retreating from the gaze of European spectators. Benares forms the head-quarters of the religious mendicants, who swarm all over India; some of these devotees are distinguished only by their disgusting filth, an indisputable mark of sanctity; while others attain a wretched pre-eminence by the frightful tortures which they inflict upon themselves. Hitherto, the efforts of the most zealous missionaries have failed to persuade many of the fanatic worshippers of Benares to quit the shrines of their idols, and to the slow progress which education is making in the East, we can alone trust for the extirpation of that horrid system of religion, which is so revolting to the Christian dwellers of the land.

The cantonment of Secrole is possessed of a handsome church, very elegantly fitted up in the

interior, and large enough to accommodate all the Protestant inhabitants of the station. Here, however, as at other places in India, not even excepting Calcutta, the lower offices are served by Pagans, Hindoo bearers being employed to pull the *punkahs* and to open the pew-doors. No one appears to be at all scandalized by the presence of these men, though, as the service is performed in a language with which they are wholly unacquainted, there can be no hope that their attendance will lead to their conversion, and it seems very extraordinary that the few Christians necessary to keep the church in order, should either not be found or not be employed for that purpose. The church compound (as it is called), during evening service, which is always performed by candlelight, exhibits the usual bustle and animation attendant upon every assemblage of Anglo-Indians. Vehicles of all descriptions are waiting outside, and the grooms, chuprassies, bearers, and other attendants, muster in considerable numbers. Within, in the cold season, when *punkahs* are not required, there is little or nothing to remind the congregation that they are breathing their orisons in a foreign and a heathen land; but when the porch is gained, the turbaned population around, the pagodas in the

distance, and the elephants and camels which wend their way across the plains, display a scene so different from that presented in the quiet neighbourhood of a country church-yard at home, that the pleasing delusion can be cherished no longer.

CHAPTER X.

TRAVELLING :—THE BUDGEROW.

THERE is scarcely any season of the year in which Anglo-Indians do not avail themselves of the grand water-privilege, as our American friends would term it, offered by the Ganges ; but at the dangerous period,—that of the rains,—when the river is full, and its mighty current comes rushing down with the most fearful velocity, its voyagers are multiplied, partly in consequence of the difficulty of traversing the country by land, and partly on account of the hope that may be entertained of a quick passage ; the navigation being more speedy than when the river is low, and its waters comparatively sluggish. In proceeding up the Ganges at the commencement of the rains, the general steadiness of the wind, usually blowing from a favourable point, enables the ascending vessels to stem the current by means of their sails ; but should the breeze fail, which is frequently the case, or prove adverse—a not unlikely contingency—the

boatmen are compelled to undergo the tedious process of tracking, in some instances not being able to drag the vessel beyond a couple of miles in the course of a long and fatiguing day's work. The progress down the river is much more rapid, the swiftness of the descent being sometimes perfectly frightful: boats are absolutely whirled along, and if, while forced at an almost inconceivable rate by the impetuosity of the current, they should strike against the keel of a former wreck; or come in contact with some of the numerous trees and other huge fragments, victims of the devouring wave, destruction is inevitable. The boat sinks at once, and the crew and passengers have little chance of escaping with their lives, unless at the moment of the concussion they jump into the river, and are able to swim to shore. The crazy and ill-appointed state of the greater portion of the vessels which navigate the Ganges, render it surprising that so little loss of life should be sustained from the vast multitudes who entrust themselves to such fragile conveyances, upon a river which, when swelled by mountain floods, and vexed by ruffling gales, comes raging and roaring like a sea. It is seldom that small boats are attached to the larger craft, to put out in case of danger, and many persons may drown

in the sight of a large fleet, without the possibility of being picked up.

Notwithstanding these and other drawbacks nearly as formidable, families proceeding to and from the Upper Provinces, generally prefer the river to any other mode of travelling, since, during the rains, though not the safest, it is by far the most practicable. Fresh arrivals, from Europe especially, find it easier to visit the places of their destination in the interior by water than by land ; the necessary preparations are less extensive, and the fatigue and trouble of the journey greatly diminished.

The safest, and the most commodious kind of vessel, with respect to its interior arrangements, is a pinnace, but it is not so well calculated to pass the shallows and sand-banks of an ever-shifting stream, as the more clumsy and less secure *budgerow*. This boat, whose name is a native corruption of the word *barge*, is, therefore, usually chosen by European travellers, to whom time and expense are objects of importance. Though, to a certain extent, the term *clumsy* may fairly be applied to a budgerow, its construction and appearance are far from inelegant ; with a little more painting and gilding, a few silken sails and streamers, and

divested of the four-footed outside passengers and other incumbrances on the roof, it would make a very beautiful object in a picture, and in its present state it has the advantage of being exceedingly picturesque. The greater part of the lower deck is occupied by a range of apartments fitted up for the accommodation of the party engaging the boat ; these are generally divided into a sleeping and a sitting room, with an enclosed verandah in front, which serves to keep off the sun, and to stow away various articles of domestic furniture. The apartments are surrounded on all sides by venetians, which exclude the sun in the day-time, and let in the air at night ; and by those who are aware of the different kinds of annoyances to be guarded against in river-travelling, they may be rendered extremely comfortable. The addition of *chicks*, blinds made of bamboo split very fine, to be unrolled when the *ghil mills*, as the venetians are called, are opened, would prevent the invasions of those numerous armies of insects which, after sunset, infest the cabins ; and those who do not consider rats desirable guests, will do well to provide themselves with a staunch terrier dog, or a couple of good cats, otherwise they may expect to be overrun with vermin, to the great increase of

dirt and bad smells, and to the destruction of clothes and the supplies for the table. In front of the cabins, the deck is of circumscribed dimensions, affording only space for the boatmen, who, on descending the river, facilitate the progress of the vessel by means of long sweeps; the upper deck, therefore, or roof, is the chief resort of the crew and the servants. At the stern the helmsman stands, perched aloft, guiding a huge rudder; the *goleer*, stationed at the prow, ascertains the depth of the water by means of a long oar; and, when the wind will permit, two large square sails are hoisted, with the assistance of which the lumbering vessel goes rapidly through the water. In addition to the furniture for the cabins, sea (or rather river) stock must be procured, consisting of groceries of all kinds, wine, beer, and brandy, salt provisions, tongues, hams, tamarind-fish,* flour, biscuits, and charcoal; a dozen or two of live fowls and ducks, and a couple of milch goats.

As the budgerow is not calculated for a heavy or cumbrous freight, a baggage-boat is necessary for the conveyance of the goods and chattels of the party, and for the accommodation of those servants who cannot be conveniently retained on board the

* Fish cured with the acid juice of the tamarind.

superior vessel. These boats are usually of the most dangerous description, and the number of accidents continually occurring to them, the destruction of property which, even if fished up from the depths of the Ganges, is totally spoiled, and the constant anxiety and alarm they occasion, would in almost any other country deter persons from hiring such rickety conveyances; but it is the custom to imperil the most valuable effects in this manner, and they are abandoned to the tender mercies of the winds and waves.

A *dinghee*, or wherry, is a very essential adjunct to river-navigation, but it is not always to be procured, and when one of these light skiffs cannot be attached to the larger craft, the communication between the cook-boat and the budgerow is frequently cut off. The former vessels are usually very heavy sailers (how they manage to get on at all, with their canvass in as ragged a condition as the pocket handkerchief of Sylvester Daggerwood, is the wonder), and they are consequently often left at a long distance behind at the arrival of the hour of dinner. The unhappy passengers in the budgerow, after waiting in vain for the smoking supplies they had anxiously expected, are compelled to be satisfied with a less substantial meal of coffee, eggs, dried

fish, or any thing else that their lockers may afford. Few persons venture to move after sunset, both on account of the dangers of the navigation from the numerous shoals and other obstructions, and the increased expense, as it would be necessary to engage a double set of boatmen, the ordinary number being insufficient for the performance of extra duties. At daybreak in the morning, the vessel is usually pushed out into the stream, spreading her sails like those of "a wild swan in its flight," or proceeding more leisurely by the united exertions of sixteen men dragging at a rope fastened at the mast-head; breakfast is laid in the outer room, and is well supplied with luxurious fare. The bread may be a little stale or a little mouldy, for the damp atmosphere of the rains is not very favourable to the staff of life, which can only be procured, in the European form, at European stations. A very good substitute, however, is offered by freshly-baked *chupatties*, of which the native servants fabricate several kinds, some resembling crumpets, others the thick griddle cakes of Ireland, while a third are counterparts of the Scottish scones. Milk purchased at the neighbouring villages is churned into butter; the tea-kettle sings merrily on a tripod fed with charcoal placed upon the deck, and there

is no want of fresh and dried fish, omelettes, and kedgeree ; whether the usual fricassees and grills can be added must depend upon the state of the live stock, and the chances of procuring fresh supplies before the vessel can reach a well-furnished bazaar. At the Hindoo villages, there is nothing to be had except milk, pulse, fruit, and vegetables, and sometimes a few eggs. From the Moosulman inhabitants, a more generous and substantial kind of provant can be obtained, chiefly consisting of poultry, it being seldom worth their while to fatten sheep for chance passengers, especially at a season in which it is impossible to keep fresh provisions for more than a day : whatever is killed in the morning must be eaten before night, and the method usually employed by the *khidmutghars*, in clearing the dinner-table, is to empty the contents of the dishes into the river.

The *dandies*, or boatmen, though frequently belonging to the lowest castes of Hindoos, will not touch a morsel of the food which comes from a Christian board. Some of the sweepers, a set of persons who enjoy perfect liberty of conscience in all matters in which dirt and filth are concerned, will not contaminate themselves with the joint, though untouched, which has been served up to

their European masters; others less scrupulous will eat any thing; but the degree of horror entertained by the mere refuse of the people, of the pollution contracted by swallowing the remnants of a Christian feast, could scarcely be credited by those who have not witnessed the strange effects of religious prejudices in India. The writer has seen the veriest outcasts—men who would steal, kill, and eat those unclean animals, the domestic pigs of a native village,—which the devourers of more orthodox pork hold in abomination,—refuse the finest meat which had figured at the budgerow-table, preferring the impure repast dishonestly obtained, to the defilement of roasts and boils from Christian cooking-pots.

After the breakfast has been cleared away, those persons who entertain any regard for their eyes or their complexions, will fasten the venetians, and darkening the boat as much as possible, employ themselves in reading, writing, or working. But strangers find it difficult to abstain from the contemplation of the novel and wondrous scenes around them. The broad and sparkling river is covered with objects of interest and attraction. In some parts of the Ganges, every wave appears to bring with it clusters and coronets of the largest and

most beautiful flowers : so numerous are the garlands which the worshippers of the deity of the stream throw into its glittering waters. The rich and luxuriant clusters of the lotus float down in quick succession upon the silvery current ; and a vivid imagination may fancy the young god Camdeo nestling amid the silken leaves of his roseate couch.* Nor is it the sacred lotus alone which embellishes the wavelets of the Ganges ; large white, yellow, and scarlet flowers pay an equal tribute ; and the prows of the numerous native vessels navigating the stream are garlanded by long wreaths of the most brilliant daughters of the parterre. India may be called a paradise of flowers ; the most beautiful lilies grow spontaneously on the sandy shores of the rivers, and from every projecting cliff some blossoming shrub dips its flowrets in the wave below.

In tracking, the budgerow is frequently not more than a yard or two from the water's edge, and nothing can be more gratifying to the eye than the moving panorama which the scenery of the Ganges exhibits. One of the most striking and

* The writer was constantly reminded of Pickersgill's beautiful picture of Camdeo floating down the Ganges on a lotus.

magnificent features of an Indian river is the ghaut. The smallest villages on the banks of the Ganges possess landing-places, which we vainly seek in the richest and most populous parts of Europe. The Anglo-Indian, landing upon the English coast, is struck with the meanness of the dirty wooden staircases which meet his eye at Falmouth, Plymouth, and other places of equal note and importance. In India, wherever a town occurs in the vicinity of a river, a superb and spacious ghaut is constructed for the accommodation of the inhabitants: the material is sometimes granite, but more frequently well-tempered and highly polished *chunam*. From an ample terrace, at the summit of the bank, broad steps descend into the river, inclosed on either side by handsome balustrades. These are not unfrequently flanked with beautiful temples, mosques, or pagodas, according to the creed of the founders; or the ghaut is approached through a cloistered quadrangle, having the religious edifice in the centre. The banian and the peepul fling their sacred branches over the richly-carved minarets and pointed domes, and those in the Brahminee villages are crowded with troops of monkies, whose grotesque and diverting antics contrast strangely with the

devotional attitudes of the holy multitudes performing their orisons in the stream.

Nothing can be more animated than an Indian ghaut; at scarcely any period of the day is it destitute of groupes of bathers, while graceful female forms are continually passing and repassing, loaded with water-pots, which are balanced with the nicest precision on their heads. The ghaut, with its cheerful assemblage, disappears, and is succeeded by some lofty overhanging cliff wooded to the top, and crowned with one of those beautiful specimens of oriental architecture scattered with rich profusion over the whole country. Green vistas next are seen, giving glimpses of rustic villages in the distance, and winding alleys of so quiet a character, that the passer-by may fancy that these sequestered lanes lead to the cottage-homes of England,—a brief illusion speedily dissipated by the appearance of some immense herd of buffaloes, either wallowing in the mud, with their horns and the tips of their noses alone out of the water, or proceeding leisurely to the river's edge, which, when gained, is quitted for the stream. A mighty plunge ensues, as the whole troop betake themselves to the water, stemming its rapid current with stout

shoulders. One or two of the leaders bear the herdsmen on their necks; very little of the forms of these men are visible, and their temerity in entrusting themselves to so wild a looking animal, and to so wide a waste of waters, excites surprise to unaccustomed eyes.

The savage herds are left behind, and the scene changes again; deep forests are passed, whose unfathomable recesses lie concealed in eternal shade; then cultivation returns; wide pastures are spread along the shore covered with innumerable herds; the gigantic elephant is seen under a tree, fanning off the flies with a branch of palm, or pacing along, bearing his master in a *howdah* through the indigo plantations. European dwellings arise in the midst of park-like scenery, and presently the wild barbaric pomp of a native city bursts upon the astonished eye. Though the general character of the country is flat, the undulations occurring on the banks of the Ganges are quite sufficient to redeem the scenery from the charge of sameness or monotony. High and abrupt promontories diversify the plain; when the river is full, the boat frequently glides beneath beetling cliffs, crowned with the crumbling remnants of some half-ruined village, whose toppling houses are momentarily threatened

with destruction ; or covered with the eyries of innumerable birds, and tapestried with wild creepers, which fling their magnificent garlands down to the sands below. Other steeps are clothed with umbrageous foliage, and between the trees glimpses are caught of superb flights of stairs, the approach from the water to some beautiful pagoda peeping out upon the summit, the habitation and the temple of a brahmin, who occupies himself solely in prayer, and in weaving garlands, part of which he devotes to the altars which he serves, and part to the bright and flowing river. These exquisite buildings occur in the most lonely situations, apparently far from the dwellings of man, and the innumerable varieties of birds, some flying in large flocks, and others stalking solitarily along the reedy shore, will at all times compensate for the absence of objects of greater importance.

The reputation for splendour of the Anglo-Indian style of living appears to be fully borne out by the grandeur of the display made upon the banks of the Hooghly. The European towns which grace the shore are superb ; palace succeeds to palace as the boat passes Ishara, Barrackpore, and its opposite neighbour Serampore, whose broad and beautiful esplanade presents one of the finest archi-

tectural landscapes imaginable; luxuriant gardens intervene between magnificent houses; some shaded with forest trees, others spreading their terraced fronts and pillared verandahs in the full glow of an eastern sun. The French settlement of Chandernagore, a little higher up, only inferior to its Danish neighbour, offers a less striking and imposing front, and though boasting houses of equal splendour, does not appear to so much advantage from the river, while Chinsurah, at a short distance, is infinitely more picturesque. Smaller habitations attract the eye, perched upon the summits of crags richly wreathed with multitudes of creeping plants, and through numerous openings between these lovely cliffs, blooming labyrinths appear, which have all the charms the imagination imparts to beauties only half revealed.

The character given to the scenery by the continued recurrence of those stately mansions, which seem more fitted for the residences of princes than for the dwellings of the civil and military servants of a company of merchants, is not entirely lost until after the budgerow has passed Moorshedabad, the residence of the Nuwáb of Bengal, a distance of 189 miles from Calcutta. From this point the landscape assumes a wilder and more decidedly

foreign aspect. Bungalows usurp the places of palaces; fortresses, half Asiatic, half European in their construction, project their battlemented walls into the stream; and when the ranges of the Rajmahl hills are left behind, every place and building of importance is of native origin. However cheering the sight of a European cantonment may be in its promise of replenishing the larder, and the prospect it holds out of social pleasures, the hideous shapes of those gigantic mounds, which look like overgrown haystacks covered with thatch, are quite sufficient to destroy the effect of the surrounding objects. Out of the numberless bungalows which disfigure the face of British India, very few, and those only which are partly built of stone, and nearly hidden in embowering groves, are in the slightest degree picturesque; and scarcely one can, under any circumstances, be introduced into a drawing.

Towards the middle of the day, the boat becomes insufferably hot; both sides have received the fierce glare of a burning sun; the heat is reflected from the water, which is now too dazzling for the eye to endure without pain; the morning breeze dies away, and it requires all the patience of a martyr to sustain the torments inflicted by the scorching

atmosphere, especially as the roofs of the cabins are usually too low to allow a *punkah* to be hung. As the sun declines, the boat gradually cools down to a more agreeable temperature; and when the welcome shadows of the woods descend upon the deck, it is delightful to sit in the open air and watch the progress of the vessel, as it nears the shore, to the spot appointed as its station for the night. The moment that the budgerow is securely moored, a very active and animated scene commences: the domestics, whose services are not required on board, and all the crew, immediately disembark; fires are kindled for the various messes; those who are anxious for quiet and seclusion, light up their faggots at a considerable distance from the boat. The rich back-ground of dark trees, the blazing fires, the picturesque groups assembled round them, and the tranquil river below, its crystal surface crimson with the red glow of an Indian sunset, or the fleeting tint fading away, and leaving only the bright broad river,—molten silver, or polished steel, as the dark shadows of the night advance,—form an evening landscape always pleasing and varying with the varying scenery of the ever-changing bank.

While the cloth is laying in the cabin for dinner, the Europeans of the party usually walk

along the sands of the river, or penetrate a short distance into the interior, sometimes passing through fields of indigo, or plantations of cotton, whose bursting pods strew the pathways; at others pausing to admire the feathery appearance of a beautiful species of grain, which resembles the snowy plumes of the ostrich, and, rising to the height of several feet, produces a magnificent effect as it is undulated by the passing breeze. The cultivated places are watched by vigilant guardians, whose duty it is to protect them from the incursions and depredations of men and beasts. At night, these persons frequently nestle like birds in the branches of the trees, some of the more luxurious having their *charpoy*s (bedsteads) fastened on convenient boughs; in the day-time, they are either perched up in a small wooden watch-tower, which, as they always sit, or rather squat, looks like the upper half of a sentry-box, raised upon a scaffold of bamboo; or, mounted on a broken-down tattoo, and armed with a long lance, they ride round their employer's territories, very much in the style of Don Quixote or a Cossack.

It is curious to observe how very little accommodation is necessary to secure the comfort of a native in these happy climes; while Europeans are

expiring with heat, the enjoyment of the Indian is unalloyed; he lives in the open air, cooks his simple meal of pulse and vegetables under a tree, and sleeps in a hut of straw scarcely large enough to contain his body. The pedestrian frequently comes upon one of these wigwams, for they are nothing more, and they seem to be favourite abodes, since gardeners in European families, who might be much better lodged, are fond of making a lair for themselves in some sequestered spot in the scene of their daily labours. A few branches are wattled together over-head, a screen of reeds placed in the direction of the wind, the earth is swept scrupulously clean, and the bed, a simple frame-work of bamboo laced together in a very ingenious manner with cord, does not look uninviting. If the heat of the day could be borne with impunity, this kind of sylvan life, realizing the romantic notions of early youth, the forest wanderings so often indulged in fancy, would be very delightful, especially where rich and nutritious fruits, some produced without cultivation and others by the lightest labour, hang temptingly within reach.

Night, always beautiful in India, assumes a still more lovely aspect when it spreads its soft veil over

the voyagers on a river; the stars, which come shining forth along the deep blue sky, inlay the waters beneath with glittering ingots; the flowers give out their most delicious odours, and rock and tree, hut and temple, are invested with a double charm. Sleep, however, does not often deign to light upon the lids of those who voyage up the river in a budgerow. The roof is crowded with two-legged and four-footed animals, whose stamping, barking, snoring, and coughing, continue without intermission through the night. The nasal power of the natives is very extraordinary: a story is related of an officer, who, irritated to madness by the midnight serenades of his hard-breathing brethren, rushed, in his *robe de chambre*, sword in hand, to the deck, and scattered the party by forcing them to betake to the water to avoid his murderous weapon. But though these enemies of repose were put to flight, others equally formidable remained; troops of jackals approach to the river's brink and pierce the air with their yells, which continue until long after midnight; doleful birds utter strange and savage cries, which come in startling loudness on the ear. The scrambling of rats up the venetians, which they use as ladders, and their races over the bed, if not provided with

musquito-curtains, though not so uproarious, do not less effectually disturb the slumbers, and the stings of insects, which even the mosquito-curtains fail to keep out, render the couch any thing but a place of rest. In fact, an eastern night is more pleasing to the eye than to the other senses, and as its enjoyments are almost wholly confined to the open air, it is wonderful that Anglo-Indians have not adopted the custom of sleeping through the day (which is comparatively quiet), in rooms cooled and darkened, and employing the less sultry but more noisy hours of the night in the pursuit of business or amusement.

Hitherto, we have only contemplated the Ganges under its most favourable aspect; there is, unfortunately, a reverse to the picture. One of the least misfortunes which the navigators may be doomed to suffer, is that of sticking on a sand-bank in the centre of the stream; when rain is added to the disaster, the day thus spent is dreary indeed, as there is nothing except the venetians to keep out the pelting of the pitiless storm; and as these blinds, though shutting tolerably closely, present numerous crevices, the weather side of the cabin cannot, by any possibility, be kept dry

The cook-boat is probably in the same predicament, but at too great a distance to render the *khansamah's* toils available; consequently, the party must be content to relinquish the hopes of a repast, which the writer recollects having looked for with great relish, in consequence of a scanty *tiffin*. As misfortunes come in troops, there may be (for painful experience has suggested the possibility,) no charcoal on board, and the tea and coffee must depend upon the chance of procuring wood from the boatmen, who seldom lay in much stock, unless they happen to have stolen in the course of a day's tracking more than has sufficed for the day's consumption. Those who contemplate a voyage will do well to remember always to have one goat at least on board, a handsome supply of charcoal, and no lack of flour, for upon these things the comfort of a party will often depend. The poor starving crew are objects of great pity; it is not until they have been working hard for hours, nearly up to their necks in water, that they abandon the vain endeavour to get the boat off; they are thoroughly wet, and have still less means of satisfying their hunger than the passengers, the religion of the greater part not permitting them to prepare their meals on board. Few, in these

extreme cases, refuse a little brandy, under the name of medicine, which, as they object to drink out of a glass which has been used by an European, is poured into the palms of their hands. The rain, though disagreeable, offers the prospect of a speedier release than would be effected without the change it produces in the height of the river. The stream, swollen by torrents, floats the vessel, and, proceeding on her course, the sand-bank is left behind. The faithful domestics in the cooking-boat make incredible efforts to supply their employers with a meal which shall banish the remembrance of the late fast: the instant they espy their master's vessel, they strive, by all sorts of contrivances, to gain it; should the place which they have reached be too shallow for sailing, they will wade for nearly a mile with the dishes held above their heads; and never can that duck be forgotten, which, destined to figure as the principal roast at a table curtailed of its animal viands by a tedious progress from the last bazaar, was considerately hashed the next day by the presiding genius of the kitchen, and made its appearance hot, after a long abstinence from the good things of this world.

The occurrence of those squalls, denominated

north-westerns, forms another serious drawback to the pleasures of river navigation ; they come on so suddenly, and with so little previous intimation, that if many boats should be assembled together, it is seldom that they sweep across the broad estuaries formed by the Ganges during the floods, without bringing death in their train. On one memorable day, when the whole surface of the sparkling waters was covered with budgerows and country craft, which had put out with a favourable breeze from Monghyr, and rounded the projecting walls of its fortress in safety, these summer barks were surprised by a tornado ; the sky was obscured, the whole surface of the water became dark and troubled, the vessels tossed to and fro upon the rushing waves, rocked and reeled—but the danger was only momentary ; those who possessed expert navigators pulled down their sails and ran under the shore, while others, less fortunate, left to the mercy of the winds, were driven at random into the whirlpool ; some were swamped and others were seen carried down by the current, the thatched awning, or chopper, as it is called, of the *pattalaks* being only visible (the crews clinging to the top) above the water. The storm passing away as quickly as it had approached, the river subsided

with equal rapidity ; but no fleet was now visible, it had been dispersed in all directions, and the ravages of this brief hurricane were made known by masts, rudders, and the more ghastly forms of drowned men, floating down the stream. These traces of the late fearful turbulence speedily vanished ; vessels which had escaped the danger, hoisted their sails to gentle zephyrs, which wafted them over seas of glass scarcely agitated by the slightest ruffle.

The sudden changes of the wind which take place during the rainy season, are still more dangerous when a gale has been blowing steadily for several days up the river, forcing the waters back. Should it veer round in a moment, which too frequently happens, the chained billows break loose, rising to a mountainous height ; wave follows upon wave, each more tremendous than the last ; the Ganges assumes the appearance of a mighty ocean lashed into fury by the winds of a thousand caves ; whole villages are overwhelmed ; lofty cliffs, undermined by the swelling surges, fall in with horrid crashes, and the scene of devastation produced by this wild warfare of the elements is beyond description frightful. Often, when moored during the heavy gales to the shore, the boats pull against the

ropes, which are fastened to stakes fixed into the ground, in the most alarming manner ; should the cables give way, destruction is almost certain ; away go the vessels (sometimes upset in the *melée*) into the middle of the stream ; darkness increases the danger, and the greater part of those who are not so fortunate as to reach the shore on the first alarm, must inevitably perish.

Another disagreeable but not dangerous casualty, which sometimes occurs in proceeding up the river, is the detention from contrary winds in some place, where a bluff promontory, rising perpendicularly from the water, will not admit of a towing-path. There is no alternative but to await a change of weather ; oars and sweeps are alike useless in contending against the force of the current ; and light boats, manned by four-and-twenty stout rowers, are baffled and driven back in attempting to stem the tide, which comes rushing round a protruding point. The influx of waters at Buxar is tremendous ; even the propelling power of steam seems to be set at nought by the giant strength of the Ganges when putting forth all its energies. At Jungheera, a bold and picturesque rock rising from the centre of the river, the current seems to concentrate its power, darting like an arrow from a

bow, and driving onwards with the impetuosity of a race-horse; boats are engulfed in the fearful vortex formed by the raging waters, and when the river is full, it is only a strong wind which can enable vessels to struggle successfully against the overpowering vehemence of the torrent.

It requires no inconsiderable share of patience to endure the annoyance of being wind-bound, especially when this circumstance occurs at such a place as Peer Pointee, which, though favoured by nature with very picturesque scenery, is peculiarly destitute of the means of supporting life. The frugal Hindoos, inhabitants of the districts at the foot of the Rajmahl Hills, have little to offer beyond rice and vegetables; fowls are to them objects of veneration, and there is difficulty in procuring a few eggs from persons who are content to live entirely without animal food. Sportsmen may recruit the larder with game, though at a season in which the waters are out in every direction, and the tanks and jheels are the haunts of alligators, it is by no means desirable to roam the jungles in search of a dinner.

A ten days' sojourn at Peer Pointee sufficed to give the writer a thorough acquaintance with all the delectabilities of being stationary at an obscure

village on the banks of the Ganges. The scenery was beautiful, and the legends connected with the Moosulmanee tombs erected on the summits of the neighbouring eminences, were sufficiently romantic to interest travellers delighting in such lore. The early history of the saintly soldiers, who propagated the creed of their prophet with fire and sword through the uttermost parts of Bengal, has been obscured by the various revolutions which succeeded the triumphs of the Moghuls under their ancient leaders. We learn the names of few of those tenants of the grave, whose mausoleums alone remain to shew the extent of their conquests; their proselytes have relapsed into idolatry, and the care of those stately tombs, which have survived the lapse of years, has been left to a miserable remnant of the faithful, vagrant *faqueers*, who profess to divide their guardianship with that of tigers, which, according to their account, every Thursday night stand sentinel over the remains of the mighty dead.

The monuments at Sicligully and the neighbouring hills have a fort-like appearance; they are surrounded by bastioned walls, and arise on spots cleared of wood on the summits of these eminences: they command fine prospects, and form of themselves

no small addition to the grandeur and interest of the scene. Objects of veneration to all the followers of Mohammed, wandering pilgrims from the remote parts of Hindostan toil their painful way to perform their orisons at these sacred spots ; but the devotees are too poor to keep up the ceremonials usually observed at the tombs of great men : lamps, which in the Upper Provinces burn upon the last resting-places of the humblest servants of the prophet, have long ceased to stream their beacon lights from these solitudes ; yet the care with which all that could litter or pollute the sacred precincts is continually removed, shews that some pious though humble hand assists the savage genii of the scene, whose office in Bengal seems to be limited to the security of the dead from intrusion. At Secundermallee, in the Carnatic, the royal animal is said to shew still greater veneration for the mouldering remains of the conquerors of the world. The natives of India rejoice in the supposition that they are possessed of the body of Alexander the Great, whose tomb on the top of a mountain is reported to be regularly swept by tigers with their tails.

During the continuance of storms, which at some periods, more especially the breaking-up of the

rains, last for several days, boats are fain to seek the shelter of some friendly creek, there to await the return of more favourable weather. The patience of the natives in these predicaments is inexhaustible ; they, it is true, have more resources at hand than the unfortunate Europeans, who see no prospect of procuring fresh supplies ; the bazaar, though it may be of the meanest description, furnishes them with food and gossip. To lounge in the corners of the market-places, discussing the prices of grain and ghee, seems to be the acmé of felicity to an Indian. It is quite as easy to persuade the boat's-crew of a man-of-war to quit the delights of the tap-room, as to induce the people belonging to a budgerow to leave the scene of their greatest enjoyment. Often, when a favourable wind springs up, a delay of several hours takes place before the servants and boatmen can be collected together. To impetuous dispositions it is exceedingly irritating to see how imperturbably calm they will sit, perched upon the driest bits of ground, smoking their hubble-bubbles, or discoursing upon some such interesting topic as that before-mentioned, while the half-distracted European, their master, is fretting and chafing at the inexorable elements. Should this fiery temperament be too frequently

permitted to break forth, the chances are much in favour of the desertion of the whole of the boat's-crew, in places where it is difficult or perhaps impracticable to procure people to engage in the service. Excepting where the dandies are turbulent, drunken, or incorrigibly lazy,—cases which do not often occur,—it is advisable to interfere with them as seldom as possible.

Gentlemen, who have had a little experience in boating in England, are apt to take the command out of the hands of the *māānjee*, or captain, and the consequences are often fatal; the vessels are lost through the mismanagement of presumptuous persons totally unacquainted with the peculiarities of the Ganges, and the method of navigation which, though strange and apparently uncouth, is much safer than those modern and scientific arts, which, however excellent in themselves, are not fitted for Indian boats and Indian rivers. The natives generally contrive to extricate their vessels from the numerous difficulties which they continually encounter, and except in some extraordinary hurricane in which neither human skill nor human strength could avail, the wrecks of budgerows which take place may generally be traced to the folly of those Europeans, who fancy

that nothing can be done well which is contrary to established practice at home, and who never miss an opportunity, however unseasonable, of compelling others to adopt their modes and customs.

From the bazaars belonging to native villages the common products of the country are the only vegetables that can be obtained ; these consist of two or three species of yams, many kinds of gourds, the *brinjhal*, of which a small variety is known in England under the name of the egg-plant, the *ramterye*, pods filled with small white seeds like pearls, which if they could be divested of their glutinous property would be delicious, red spinach, and several kinds of greens. At large European stations, exotic productions are purchasable ; and there is a very pleasing relic of the old hospitality of India still remaining, that of sending fruit and vegetables as presents to boats containing European travellers. When the parties have any acquaintance at a station, ample supplies of bread, butter, and meat are added ; but the navigators of the Ganges have grown too numerous to admit of the indiscriminate bounty formerly shewn to all strangers, by residents on the river's banks. In wild and unfrequented places, invitations are still sent addressed to the " gentleman in the budgerow,"

whose name is unknown to the settled inhabitant
“on hospitable thoughts intent,” and no deserving
persons can remain long in India without possess-
ing themselves of valuable friends, made by some
chance collision in travelling through the country.

CHAPTER XI.

THE THUGS OF THE DOOAB.

THE exploits of banditti, their mode of obtaining plunder, their habits and manners, whether represented on the stage, or described in narratives, either real or fictitious, have ever proved highly attractive to all classes of persons. Murders, in addition to the thrilling excitement which their discovery always produces, are invested with new and deeper interest when perpetrated by a band of men connected with each other by peculiar laws, and seeking the destruction of human life with the same avidity and indifference to its waste, which actuate the hunter in his pursuit of the beasts of the field, in realms where subsistence is alone afforded by the chase. Hitherto Spain, Germany, and Italy, have been the favourite theatres for the achievements of robbers, and it would seem scarcely possible that plans more systematic and barbarous than those adopted by the celebrated Gasparoni and his associates, in the neighbourhood of Rome, should ever

be developed to the shuddering eye. It is now, however, proved, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that Hindostan yearly sends forth hordes of practised murderers, who pursue their fearful trade with the most deliberate coolness, constantly upon the watch for fresh victims, and taking many lives for the sake of some trifling spoil.

Although, during a considerable period, the existence of Thugs (as they are called, from their dexterity in strangling) was suspected, the ideas formed concerning them were extremely vague and uncertain. Reports went abroad of the fate of travellers ensnared, while walking or riding upon the road, by a silken noose thrown over their heads, in the manner of the *lasso*, and the perpetrators were supposed to be isolated individuals infesting the wild and less frequented parts of India. Many persons imagined that these atrocities were confined to the Rajpoot states and the kingdom of Oude, districts exhibiting scenes of outrage and bloodshed unknown to the Company's territories; but, in 1830, the apprehension of a band of depredators was the means of bringing the whole of an unparalleled system of atrocity to light, and the depositions of some of the criminals have proved that, in this instance, rumour, so far from exaggerating

the horrors of the deeds committed, has fallen short of the truth.

Thugs * or Phansegars † (as they are styled, to distinguish them from common decoits ‡) consist of a set of abandoned characters, either Moosulmans or Hiandoos, of various castes, who live for a part of the year in cities or villages, apparently engaged in harmless employments. These persons resemble Freemasons, so far as they are always known to each other by some distinguishing sign. At a convenient period, the brotherhood of each district assemble together, and, being formed into bands, disperse themselves over large tracts of country, those of the Dooab moving down towards the central provinces, and in their devastating progress waylaying, robbing, and murdering every individual who has the misfortune to cross their path.

The year in the East-Indies is divided into three seasons,—the cold weather, the hot winds, and the rains. During the latter period, the country being

* *Thug*, ‘villain, rascal,’ in the common acceptation, but applied, in the western provinces, to stranglers on the highway.

† The literal meaning of *Phansegar* is ‘hangman;’ but the name is used indiscriminately with that of *Thug*, to designate a peculiar species of murderer.

‡ Robbers.

very widely inundated, the travelling is chiefly confined to the rivers, and it is not until the commencement of the cold season that the Phansegars make their appearance, and then they have an ample field for plunder.

The native inhabitants of India appear to be much addicted to locomotion ; pleasure, business, or religion frequently calls them from home ; they go to assist at a marriage, the annual fairs held at different places attract a vast concourse of persons, and the religious festivals are still more numerously attended. Sometimes a few, who are bound to the same place, form themselves into a small *kafila*, or caravan ; but they more frequently travel in parties of three or four, and not seldom perform their journeys entirely alone. Each day's progress varies from ten to thirty miles, consequently very long periods are consumed in travelling, since even if the journey be not made on foot, the same cattle are employed for the whole distance, and frequent halts are necessary to recruit their strength. At night, if there should not be a convenient *serai* (a building appropriated for the reception of travellers), the wayfarers seek the shelter of a temple, or bivouac upon the plain, generally choosing the neighbourhood of a well for the site of their rude

encampment. A few sticks, gathered or purchased in the bazaar, suffice for a fire kindled on the ground, and the simple repast of rice, vegetables, or meal, being ended, each person wraps himself in the garment he may chance to possess, and lying down upon the bare earth, enjoys those slumbers which an Asiatic never appears to seek in vain.

The facilities thus offered for the commission and concealment of murder are very great. It frequently happens that, owing to the circumstances above-mentioned, the route of a stranger cannot be traced, or any particular spot fixed upon as the scene of his death, either by violence or natural means. In traversing the plains of India, travellers are exposed to many dangers unconnected with robbers; they often drink incautiously of cold water after a fatiguing march, and are seen to drop either dead or dying beside the wells. A night spent in a jungle infested with malaria is equally fatal; and there are the less common perils from the attacks of tigers and the bites of snakes to encounter. Several weeks, if not months, must necessarily elapse before the death of an individual who has quitted his home becomes positively known, and when it has been ascertained beyond a doubt, the cause still remains a mystery, and is generally at-

tributed to fever. This statement will, in some measure, account for the absence of all inquiry concerning the fate of the numerous individuals, who, during a series of years, have been deliberately murdered by the Phansegars. It is the custom for sepoy's to obtain furloughs during the hot winds, a period in which, in time of peace, few military duties are performed. These men often save large sums of money, which they carry home to their families, and numbers, supposed to have died a natural death or deserted, it is now but too certain, have fallen under the murderers' grasp. The number of bodies discovered every year, under extremely suspicious circumstances, certainly ought to have occasioned a greater degree of vigilance on the part of the civil authorities than appears to have been exercised. During 1809 and 1810, according to an official report from a very zealous servant of the East-India Company, no fewer than sixty-seven bodies were taken out of the wells in the single district of Etawah; and though we learn, by the same authority, that many persons had been apprehended, tried, and convicted for murder and highway robbery, under circumstances similar to those ascribed to the Thugs; up to 1816, much scepticism prevailed respecting the existence of a

distinct class of persons forming themselves into regular societies, and practising a peculiar species of robbery as a profession. The appalling fact that the towns and villages of the Dooab and Bundelkund (frontier provinces, divided by the Jumna) actually swarm with assassins, who, like the members of that mysterious tribunal so long the terror of Germany, mingle unsuspected with the peaceable portion of the community, is now placed beyond dispute, and in all probability the whole of Hindostan nourishes in its bosom similar hordes of practised murderers.*

The incursions of the freebooters of the Dooab have been carried on in the vast tracts lying beyond the Company's territories stretching to Ajmere; but as they have had the audacity to approach very near to the British cantonments of Mhow and Neemuch, it is but too probable that numbers of their order prowl about in search of victims in the more thickly inhabited districts. They carefully avoid the attack of Europeans, as they are well aware that their disappearance would lead to investigations of a very

* A detailed account of the system of *Thuggy* is to be found in an early volume of the Asiatic Researches; but the perusal of this work is confined to so small a circle, that few are acquainted with the information it contains.

dangerous nature. The natives are a more easy prey, and as, from the causes detailed, detection is extremely difficult, it is only by the publicity given to the atrocities committed by these miscreants, that travellers can be put upon their guard against the machinations of such artful marauders. It will be seen that the tranquil state of the country, which, since the conclusion of the Mahratta war, has been entirely free from the irruptions of the Pindarrees, and other fierce predatory tribes, has been particularly favourable to the pursuits of the Thugs; and to join themselves into large *kafilas*, and to keep regular watch, can alone secure peaceable travellers from the attacks of persons apparently as harmless as themselves.

To the spirited exertions of the political agent of Mahidpore, we are indebted for a full exposition of the system of *Thuggy*. Several individuals of a party apprehended by his orders, upon suspicion of being concerned in murders lately perpetrated, were induced to make an ample confession of their crimes. The testimony of each person corroborated that of his comrade, and the remains of the victims, stated to have been sacrificed during the last excursion, were found by a party of sepoy in the places pointed out.. Copies of these deposi-

tions were sent to the offices of the district judges, and it is from these authenticated documents that the information now afforded to European readers has been extracted. It will be necessary to premise, that the accidental discovery of several dead bodies led to the detection of a large band of Phansegars, and to the establishment of the fact of their being connected with organized bodies of similar miscreants, who for a series of years had made predatory excursions, in which they had perpetrated deeds of the darkest and most sanguinary nature.

The inhabitants of the village of Bordah were alarmed one morning by a report that the mangled remains of two men, supposed to have been carried off by tigers, were lying in the road. The whole population immediately rushed out to gaze upon the dreadful spectacle : but a slight inspection sufficed to convince them that although the bodies were shockingly torn by wild beasts, they must have been previously dragged from an adjacent heap of stones ; and proceeding in their search, three others were found beneath the pile, stripped and quite fresh, but neither torn nor wounded. It was then remembered that a large kafila of travellers had been observed encamped, on the preceding day, very near that spot, and that a wood-cutter,

who was passing from the jungle with a *hackery*-load of fuel, had been prevented from approaching by the command of a person in authority, who, telling him that it was an *Angraisy* (English) *kafila*, desired him to get his bullocks out of the way until it should pass. Information was instantly conveyed to the resident of Mahidpore, and the apprehension of the murderers took place in the manner described in the following confession, which will be found to be not less remarkable for the horrid scenes it developes than for the cool audacity of their relation.

“ I am one of the band of Phansegars now in confinement, and in the village of Dehole, about eight *coss* northward of Bheelwara, was stopped with my associates as we were returning to our homes in Hindostan. At this place, a party of eight or ten *suwars* (mounted police) came upon us and said, that the *burrah sahib* (‘ great man,’ meaning the political agent), having heard that we were carrying opium out of Malwa, had sent them to detain us ; on learning this, our minds were relieved from the apprehension which their appearance occasioned. We had been once or twice searched for opium before, but none being found upon us, were allowed to proceed without molestation ; we there-

fore readily consented to return to Bheelwara, as we expected to be permitted to depart as soon as it could be proved that we were not engaged in smuggling. But upon our arrival, we discovered that the party were better acquainted with our habits and pursuits than we had imagined, for the people of the town joined the *suwars* in securing our persons and preventing our escape. We, of course, loudly declared our innocence, boasting of our ability to clear ourselves whenever we should be brought before the *sahib*, and to prove satisfactorily to him that the accusations preferred against us, of our being Thugs and Phansegars, were totally groundless. We then stated that we were possessed of an English pass, and that any attempt to detain us would be severely punished; but seeing that all our representations were of no avail, and that our guards were equally deaf to entreaties and threats, I became alarmed, and could think of no better method of securing my own life than by the confession of the truth, and the offer to disclose all that I knew, upon the promise of a pardon. This assurance being granted, and my mind being now at ease by its confirmation, I shall with the utmost readiness furnish a full account of all our proceedings.

“ My father was a cultivator in Buraicha, which occupation I also followed, but joined the Thugs when I was about thirty years old, and have since continued to be more or less connected with them. Before the establishment of tranquillity, I served under a celebrated chief, Oodey Sing, at which time our excursions were neither carried to so great a distance as they have been since, nor were they so lucrative or certain ; for, in those days, travellers, particularly if they possessed much property, seldom ventured to go from one place to another without being well escorted, and in large parties, and we feared the Pindarrees as much as others who were not of our profession. It was our custom to collect in bands of twenty or thirty, belonging to neighbouring villages, after the rainy season was over, and to proceed in different directions to distant countries in quest of plunder. Each band possessed a chief, who was invested with supreme authority, and to every man in the company was given an allotted part ; some were employed as scouts, who, spreading themselves round, gave notice of the approach of passengers ; others took the office of spies, and, lounging in the bazaars and serais, often persuaded unsuspecting persons to join our company, in which case their death was inevita-

ble. The duty of a third number consisted in seeking out convenient spots wherein to dig the graves of those who were marked out as our victims, a preparation invariably made before the commission of the murder; others were in readiness to convey the bodies to the places of interment; and thus, in an incredibly short time, the whole business was performed. A few of the most daring and expert were alone entrusted with the strangling, an art which, requiring long practice and peculiar dexterity, is never allowed to be self-assumed, but is conferred with due ceremony, after the fitness of the candidate, in point of firmness, bodily strength, and activity, has been ascertained. When properly qualified, the aspirant is conducted to the field by his *gooroo* (spiritual guide), who looks out anxiously for some favourable omen, such as the chirping of certain birds, or their flight past the right hand; when this occurs, he knots the *roomaul* (handkerchief) at each end, and delivers it to the candidate, imploring success upon his exertions. After this, they return and end the ceremony by a feast or a distribution of sweetmeats. The remainder of the band are employed variously in menial offices, cutting wood, looking after the bullocks and *tat-teos*, &c. When a sufficient quantity of property

is collected, it is divided into shares and sent home under a proper escort to the different villages where we have our habitations. As appearances were often very fallacious, people who seemed poor affording frequently a richer booty than those possessed of baggage, it was our invariable practice to rob every person who fell in our way, and these depredations were in every instance preceded by murder. I cannot pretend to say how many travellers lost their lives by our hands during our last excursion, such things being of too common occurrence with people of our habits to make much impression upon me or any of my associates, who had been long familiar with them, or to excite us to inquire into the particular circumstances attending the acquisition of plunder by detached parties.

“ I have never known, since I belonged to the Thugs, a single instance of robbery committed by them without the previous destruction of life, generally by strangulation. This is effected either by means of a *roomaul*, or shred of cloth well twisted and wetted, or merely by the hands, though the last is rarely practised, and only in the event of failure in the former and usual mode. On a preconcerted signal being given, the victim or victims are immediately overpowered, and the perpe-

tration is the business of a moment. In committing murder, it is a strict rule with the Thug to avoid shedding blood, as its traces would, in many cases, lead to detection. In the hurry, however, in which it is sometimes necessary to provide for the disposal of a more than ordinary number of bodies, the graves cannot be made large enough to contain them entire, in which case they are cut into pieces and closely packed. When buried by the road-side, or any other exposed place, it was our practice to kindle fires on the spot, in order to prevent the marks of the newly-turned earth from being too conspicuous. Murders in the manner I have described are accomplished with equal certainty and despatch, and with the same facility while the victims are walking along the roads, as when they have been enticed to our encampment and are sitting amongst us confident and secure, while we have every thing carefully and leisurely prepared for their destruction. These murders are frequently perpetrated contiguous to villages, from whence we have induced strangers, on their journey from distant parts, to take up their quarters in our company. They are usually performed before the twilight is completely over; and while the work is going on, a part of our band are singing and beat-

ing their tomtoms, in order to drown any noise the sufferers might make, and to give our whole camp the appearance of careless festivity: thus our victims are despatched with ease and security, even within call of assistance and almost in the face of a whole village.

“The different persons actually engaged commence their operations simultaneously, and by a signal given, which of course is preconcerted, but at the same time quite arbitrary, generally a common place expression not likely to excite attention, such as *tumba-koo low* (bring tobacco). The *roomaul*, or twisted shred, is the only implement used by the Thugs. I have never seen the noose made of cord, though I am aware of the general supposition that we are in the habit of employing such an instrument in the commission of our murders; but if it ever was adopted its use has been long abandoned, for this obvious reason, that if in any search so suspicious an article should have been found upon us, there would have been no difficulty in guessing our profession. In passing through a country, the large number of which our bands consist is sufficient in itself to excite inquiry, and we are always obliged to have some plausible tale or explanation ready, to remove any doubt

respecting the peaceableness of our characters and pursuits. Few carry arms ; amid twenty or thirty persons there will not be above three swords, and we have emissaries at all the *kutcherries* of the different districts, who manage in various ways to screen us from detection when the murder of missing persons is suspected.

“ I proceed now to give an account of the events that took place during our late excursion. We had journeyed several days without falling in with more than one traveller (the only class of persons against whom our designs were directed); but about the middle of the sixth stage, we came to a river, where we found four sepoy, who were proceeding to their homes on furlough, cooking their meal. When these men saw us approach, they seemed to entertain some suspicion, for they hurried over their repast, and hastened onwards to a village, whither our spies followed, and saw them fairly lodged, while we halted at some distance, and knowing the road they would take, a strong party was despatched next morning, who waylaid them and executed their purpose, though not without difficulty, for one of the sepoy, notwithstanding he was taken by surprise, raised his spear in his defence ; but resistance proved vain, he was over-

powered by numbers and murdered with his companions. We found two thousand rupees upon their persons, and soon after the junction of our band, fell in with four *prasaharies* (strolling actors), who joined us, as we spoke kindly to them, and pretending a wish to see their performances, we promised them a rupee for our evening's entertainment. They fell into the snare, and, without waiting for the *tamasha* (shew), we took their lives and possessed ourselves of their property, amounting to forty rupees. Amongst their effects, there was a *maerding* (hand-drum), which we afterwards used as an accompaniment to our songs. The next day we met a body of fellow Phansegars, returning to Bundelcund with their booty ; they were in pursuit of two men, who travelled with a loaded bullock, and invited us to accompany them and share the spoil, which we did, but got nothing but a brass pot and a few clothes. We were more fortunate in encountering two Brahmins, who were returning to their homes in Hindostan, and to whom we pretended that our business lay the same way, though in reality we retraced our steps for the purpose of effecting their destruction, which we accomplished in the usual manner, and were rewarded by a quantity of gold : they had also some

loans (drafts upon native bankers); but these we burned.

“At our next quarters, our spies became acquainted with a *seubadah* and two sepoys, his companions, and persuaded them to quit the lodging they had taken in the bazaar, and encamp with us outside the village, where we also enticed another traveller, and having strangled them all, we removed the bodies to the distance of a quarter of a mile for interment, as the *tope* (grove) where we halted seemed too much frequented for the purpose. This also proved a rich prize. We were obliged to follow the next traveller during four entire days, before we could find a convenient opportunity for the completion of our wishes, paying him the most profound attention the whole time, and insinuating ourselves into his favour by flattering courtesies. He was a rich man and well attended, which increased the difficulty of the enterprize; but we succeeded at last; and a few days afterwards, by the same specious pretences and deceitful words, persuaded four sepoys to sojourn with us for the night, and so made a good booty. We subsequently fell in with two travellers, a Moosulman and a Brahmin; the usual artifices were practised with success; they halted in our

company for the day, and were murdered before night. A *tattoo* laden with opium formed the most valuable portion of their effects; we carried the drug to the next town, and sold it for a hundred rupees, twenty-five of which we were obliged to give to the *cutwal* (police-officer) who managed the sale. We here found eighteen Phansegars of the Moosulmaun gang, who had been out for some time, but being dissatisfied with their acquisitions, agreed to join us.

“A report having been brought of four travellers having passed, heavily laden, though they were considerably a-head, it was deemed advisable to dispatch twenty-five of our stoutest men in pursuit. After a long fatiguing march, they overtook their prey, but to their great disappointment found nothing amid the baggage, which had promised plunder, but the common tools of stone-cutters, their owners being miserably poor, and in search of employment. We also at this time lost a capital booty, which seemed to be within our grasp. A party of horse-dealers joined our company; but they were fifteen in number, including attendants, and the difficulty of securely disposing of so many bodies in an open country, consumed so much of the night in consultation, that we considered it

advisable to forego our designs, and the same evening some petty thieves stole upon us and carried off every thing they could find. Three pedlars soon afterwards fell into our hands, but their wares, consisting of cornelians and other articles of trifling value, were not worth more than twenty rupees.

“The next day we overtook six palankeen-bearers returning from service, accompanied by two women and two children; these people at the end of the stage lodged themselves in an old temple in the village, which baffled our attempts for the time; but, as they proceeded freely with the party the next morning, we easily effected our purpose in a convenient jungle, the people a-head preparing the graves, which were necessarily very deep and wide, as there were ten bodies to inter. A few rupees, clothes, ornaments of trifling value, and their cooking utensils, alone repaid our time and trouble. Four other travellers shortly afterwards crossed our path: one of them had a cage with five *mynahs* (talking birds) in it, which he was bringing up from Bombay; they had also a *tattoo*, money, and clothes, all of which of course we possessed ourselves of.

“ We were subsequently exceedingly alarmed by the attention we excited upon meeting a train of *hackeries*, escorted by sepoy, coming from Mhow ; one of these guards remarked in our hearing that some persons of similar appearance had been apprehended near the English cantonment, and in consequence of this intimation we made our halting-place in a very retired spot. One of our spies, however, ventured into the bazaar of the neighbouring town, and while loitering there, a party of mounted travellers came in, and added to his fears by the scrutinizing glances which one of them cast upon him. After regarding him very attentively, he observed to his companions that the necklace he wore was the exact counterpart of one belonging to his brother. Our spy, in excessive apprehension of their recognition, expected to be instantly arrested, but finding that no immediate attempt was made to detain him, he took the earliest opportunity to slip away, and reporting what had passed, we all hastily departed, pushing forward for several miles before we thought it safe to halt.

“ Our party, which was very large, then separated ; the band to which I was attached moved to Pitlewred, and rested at a large stone-well outside

the town, near which we found a *mahajun* (merchant) and four attendants preparing their meal. The *mahajun*, from his respectable appearance, his dress and ornaments, became the object of our attention; but it seemed as if he did not like the looks of his neighbours, for, having hastily finished his repast, he and his servants set forward on their journey. Not daring at this time to follow, we suffered them to escape, but found afterwards that he had fallen in with one of our detached parties, and proved a rich prize. Proceeding towards Nee-much, we enticed four travellers to our camp, and though not far from the English cantonment, contrived to put them to death. A stage or two beyond, we despatched another foot passenger; and near the village of Sauganeer, we strangled four *bunniahs* (shop-keepers). Nothing further occurred until we arrived in Dehole, where, as I have already stated, we were arrested.

“ I have now mentioned all the murders of which I was an eye-witness, except perhaps two or three not attended with any remarkable circumstance, which may have escaped my recollection.”

A few words will furnish a sketch of the localities of the places where many of these sanguinary

along the plains of Mysore and the Carnatic. Those in the neighbourhood of Bangalore do not yield in magnificence to the most celebrated pagodas of the Peninsula, and they are the favourite resort of all who possess any taste for architectural beauty; while, to the less intellectual portion of the community, the music, dancing, the banquet, and perhaps above all the feats of jugglers, offer high gratification.

The Madras jugglers are famous all over the world; the exploits of Ramo Samee are still fresh in the recollection of the inhabitants of London; and though the exhibition of similar acts of dexterity is often more extraordinary than pleasing, the display of legerdemain in India would almost induce the belief that the age of necromancy had not passed away. A man who, in 1828, seated himself in the air without any apparent support, excited as much interest and curiosity as the automaton chess-player who astonished all Europe a few years ago; drawings were exhibited in all the Indian papers, and various conjectures formed respecting the secret of his art, but no very satisfactory discovery was made of the means by which he effected an apparent impossibility. The bodies of the Madras jugglers are so lithe and supple, as

most venomous serpents with impunity, by means of the snake-stone, a smooth, flat substance, the size of a tamarind stone, and nearly the same shape: this is said to be extracted from the head of the animal; and though the fallacy of the idea of the concealment of a precious jewel in a serpent's head has been ably refuted by one of the contributors to the *Asiatic Researches*, the opinion still prevails that some of the stones vended by the cunning manufacturers are genuine.*

* In Major Moor's very pleasing volume of *Oriental Fragments*, are some details respecting snake-catching, snake-stones, and the tricks of the *sampooris*, or snake-catchers. He describes the process employed by one of these artists to charm a snake from his (the Major's) dwelling, and to extract the stone, apparently from the jaws of the reptile. He proceeds: "A clever Parsee servant had reminded us that we had lately lost many fowls, adding that he should not wonder if there was another *samp* somewhere near the fowl-house. Thither we went; and, after the usual ceremonies, sure enough another was caught. I smelt a rat; and, causing the exulting catcher to bring his writhing captive into the veranda, watched narrowly the lithotomic process. At the proper moment I, to the great astonishment of my friend Forbes and the other spectators, seized the snakeless hand of the operator; and there found, to his dismay, perdue in his well-closed palm, the intended-to-be-extracted stone.

"The fellow made a full and good-humoured confession of the trick, as touching the second snake and the concealed

high-way in the districts of Allahabad, Ghazepore, and Juanpore, will be observed in the detail reports of the last year, said to have been perpetrated by persons assuming the garb of Byragees, who join travellers at *mhuts* (temples), and accompanying them upon the road, take an opportunity of mixing the seeds of the datura, or other narcotic plants, with the *hookah* or food of the travellers, and plunder them when killed or stupified by the dose. These murders are not, I apprehend, committed by the persons termed Thugs, as poisoning would appear the only means of destruction used by the robbers. At the same time, as they have prevailed for some years, particularly in the district of Juanpore, and the circumstances attending each case are nearly alike, there seems reason to believe that some association similar to that of the Thugs of the Dooab is established in Juanpore and its vicinity. Pilgrims proceeding to the west and north, to Gya or to Juggernaut, in Cuttack, take Benares in their way, and pass through the district of Juanpore in their route to Hurdwar, or to Muttra, and Bindrabund. The circumstance of various roads meeting in this district, combined with the facilities afforded for escape by the proximity of the country

of the Nawaub Vizier (now King of Oude), are probably amongst the causes why this offence is more prevalent in Juanpore than elsewhere.

“ 5th class.—Travellers have been frequently found murdered in that part of the country placed under the joint magistrate stationed at Ghazeepore. The bodies have commonly been found buried, and the same offence can be traced to the eastward through the district of Tirhoot.

In the detailed reports of the state of the police during the last year, in the jurisdiction of the first magistrate of Ghazeepore, a case will be found stated, in which it will appear from the magistrate's enquiries, that a fraternity of *Gosheins* (religious beggars) had long been established in that quarter, who were said to entice travellers to their *mhut*, particularly sepoy, and to murder them. It is not stated what means of destruction are used by these people, but in the examination taken before Mr. Cracroft, the zemindar would appear to be concerned with the Gosheins in these nefarious practices; and it is stated by a witness, that numbers of travellers have for a series of years been made away with in this quarter. The establishment of *chokies* on the high-way, and the employ-

ment of the village watch in aid of these *chokies*, are in every respect the most certain and efficient arrangements which can be devised for the suppression of this crime.

END OF VOL. I.

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SCENES AND CHARACTERISTICS

OF

HINDOSTAN,

WITH

SKETCHES

OF

ANGLO-INDIAN SOCIETY.

BY EMMA ROBERTS,

AUTHOR OF

“Memoirs of the Rival Houses of York and Lancaster,” “Oriental Scenes,” &c. &c.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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SCENES AND CHARACTERISTICS

OF

HINDOSTAN.



CHAPTER I.

ALLAHABAD.

ALLAHABAD holds a middle rank amongst European stations in the Mofussil, being many degrees in advance of the slenderly-garrisoned cantonments of the jungles, yet very inferior to the large depôts, such as Cawnpore, Meerut, &c.

Allahabad, or 'the abode of God,' acquired this name from the Moosulman conquerors of India, who have left memorials of their splendour in a fortress once unequalled in beauty, and now gaining in strength what it has lost in external appearance,—several tombs remarkable for the elegance of their structure, and a garden and serai belonging to one of the emperors. The city itself does not display those remains of magnificence which might have been expected in a place favoured by the pre-

sence of royalty, and so admirably adapted both for the commerce of its new possessors, and for the security of their dominions in the provinces of Hindostan. It now retains few vestiges of the Moghul conquest, save the appellation and the buildings before-mentioned, its Moosulmanee inhabitants being limited in numbers, and of little importance as regards their wealth, rank, or talent. The city is almost wholly given up to idolatry, and has ever been celebrated for the pilgrimage of pious Hindoos, attracted to a spot blessed by the junction of two sacred rivers. It stands upon the extreme point of the Dooab, the name given to the fertile district which divides the Ganges from the Jumna, and is therefore esteemed holy by all castes, who annually repair in crowds to bathe themselves in the united streams.

While infanticide, merely for the purpose of avoiding the expense of bringing up female children, was the open disgrace, and is still the secret practice, of many classes of Hindoos, the curse of sterility has ever been considered, both by rich and poor, as the greatest misfortune that can attend the married state. When prayers and gifts to brahmins have been unsuccessfully employed to obtain the desired blessing, the despairing supplicants not

unfrequently attempt to propitiate their blood-thirsty goddess, Doorga, by the promised sacrifice of their first-born. Should their desire be accomplished,—a benefit which is of course attributed to the direct interposition of a deity delighting in the waste of human life,—they consider themselves to be solemnly pledged to the performance of the vow, and the hallowed spot in which the Jumna throws itself into the Ganges, is very commonly chosen for the fulfilment of the awful duty. Though the crime of infanticide, upon any pretext whatever, is not permitted by the British Government, there is not much difficulty in eluding the laws in force against it, since the natives are possessed of so many facilities for accomplishing in private what they no longer dare to perform before the world. A small quantity of opium, administered in the first nourishment given to a new-born babe, will send it to its everlasting rest ; and as no inquiry is instituted respecting the cause of death perpetrated without apparent violence, and where the probabilities are in favour of its having been occasioned by natural accidents, the murderers escape detection. It is not difficult, when the broad surface of the united rivers is covered with boats, to drop the intended victim into the stream, a catastrophe which may be attri-

buted to accident, and which the religious prejudices of the surrounding multitude would prevent from being brought to the notice of the public authorities ; while the fatalism which renders Hindus apathetic, in the midst of danger to themselves or to others, is too great to induce them to make any attempt to rescue a drowning person from the grave. It is said that the brahmins, on the supposition that Doorga may relent, and willingly relinquish the offered sacrifice, station themselves in boats a little way down the stream, and pick up those children who have escaped the dangers of the first plunge; they are not, however, restored to their families, but retained by their protectors, and brought up in the performance of religious offices.

When the affection of the parents for their first-born has been too strong to allow them to devote so beloved an object to the consequences of a rash oath, the intended victim, when arrived at maturity, stung with remorse at the violation of a duty held so imperative, and attributing every family misfortune to the wrath of the justly-incensed Doorga, have voluntarily performed the sacrifice by plunging into the river, or precipitating themselves from some rugged height to a frightful abyss below.

In the Rajpoot states, the destruction of female

infants was, and it is to be feared still is, common in the highest families, for political reasons. The representations of the British residents, and their eloquent appeals to the better feelings of kind-hearted, though misguided men, have done much, especially in Guzerat, towards the abolition of this inhuman method of getting rid of a dilemma ; but there is no law against it, and the tragedy of Kishen Koor, the most cold-blooded murder ever perpetrated by the hand of man, is still recent. The brother of the beautiful victim, slaughtered to secure a state measure, now sits upon the throne of Oodipore ; he was innocent of the cruel deed, and there is reason to hope that so shocking a scene will never be acted publicly again.

In less exalted families, the money essential, on the part of the relatives of the bride, to furnish the wedding paraphernalia and to defray the expenses of the feasts, without which no wedding can be celebrated in India, is so difficult of attainment, that although there are plenty of suitors of the same class to be found, it is deemed better to avoid the weariful business of saving cowries and pice until they amount to rupees, by giving the *coup de grâce* to the impertinent intruder who has put the family to inconvenience by entering it in a female shape.

“ Daughters to marry,” is the excuse given by servants who, having high wages, appear ill-apparelled, and in ragged case: years of privation must be endured, in order that all their acquaintance may banquet at the period of the nuptials. This is the “ one thing needful;” beauty, accomplishments, and amiable qualities may be dispensed with, but a *burra khana* (great dinner) there must be, and where it is not practicable to furnish forth the wedding-feast, parents, with admirable forethought, strangle their children, who would otherwise grow up to be married.

In former and more barbarous times, the junction of the Jumna and the Ganges was the scene of those fearful human sacrifices, which were not more savage than absurd, in a religion professing so much humanity towards the brute creation. A youth and a maiden, representing two of the favourite deities of the Hindoo Olympus, after having received divine honours from the crowd following their triumphal cars, were flung into the sacred waters, and supposed by the ignorant multitude, deluded by a clumsy device of priestcraft, to be borne upon the holy stream to their dwellings in the paradise of the blessed. Figures of clay are now substituted for the human performers in the

pageant, which, degenerating into a vulgar show, serves to amuse the rabble on the anniversary of a festival fast falling into contempt.

Another of these horrible spectacles used to be exhibited at the commemoration of the triumph of Rāma and his ally, Hunamān, attended by an army of monkeys, over the giant Ravana. The luckless beings selected to enact the principal characters, were at the end of the festival no longer visible to mortal eyes. The uninstructed imagined that they had been absorbed into the divine essence, and claimed by the deities whom they had represented: a process of which the officiating priests knew the secret. Poison was said to be mixed up with the sweetmeats presented at the termination of the feast, and the unhappy groupe, brought from a distance, and unseen except during the short period of their performances, were by many supposed to have been the deities themselves, descending to assist at the celebration of their *avatar*. The Moghuls have the credit of being the first opposers of these shocking rites; the Christian governors of the land have insisted upon their total abolition; and the example set in the Company's territories has been followed in the independent states, human sacrifices, excepting such as are voluntary, having become

rare in India. The slaughters of the temple at Jyepoor have ceased, and the most fanatic of the priesthood are fain to be content with the blood of goats upon the pavements, once purple with the currents which ran in the veins of their fellow men.

A tax has been levied by the Government upon the pilgrims resorting to Allahabad; this impost has had the effect of lessening the number of bathers, and of preventing in a great measure the immolations already spoken of: a method of opposing the hideous superstitions of Hindooism, in strict accordance with the mild policy pursued by a government, which would inevitably occasion the overthrow of its own authority by a more direct and coercive mode of rooting out idolatry from the land. The tax, in that brilliant era when the rupee-tree was seen to flourish, and the Indian soil was paved with pagodas and gold mohurs, was the perquisite of the governor of the fort, a citadel of the utmost importance when the country was in an unsettled state. In the present peaceable times, it has become a quiet and honourable asylum for a veteran who, passed the period for active service, has retired to end his days in the land of his adoption: many general officers preferring to spend the remnant of a long life, worn out in military duties,

in the country which has seen their toils, to a return home, where they will find themselves strangers, and must seek new occupations and new employments for the mind. The government of the fort at Allahabad is, therefore, an appointment much sought by invalided officers of rank; the command possesses many advantages, though the pecuniary emoluments have been most cruelly curtailed.

In these degenerate days, a rigorous inquiry has been instituted respecting every illegitimate method of increasing the pay and allowances, too often found to be insufficient for the purpose of accumulating the means of returning home, and many snug perquisites have been taken away, which, not enriching the state, makes its military servants "poor indeed." In every garrisoned place, cantonments are marked out, under the superintendence of the officers of the surveyor general's or quartermaster general's department, for the accommodation of the troops. Officers are permitted to build bungalows and to plant gardens upon this land, which become their own property, subject however to the pleasure of the Government, who, in removing buildings for the public service, give the owners a compensation. Natives are also allowed to construct residences for the use of officers or persons

connected with the garrison; fitting spots are selected for the huts of the sepoy, which are generally erected in the rear of the parade-ground, and close to small tenements of brick or stone, built for the security of the arms, and resembling gigantic sentry-boxes. The bazaar is close at hand, and from the tolls and dues collected in these markets, and the permission granted for the opening of toddy-shops, a snug revenue used to be derived by the commanding officer of a small station, or the brigade-major of a large garrison. There are besides, in extensive cantonments, waste lands, which the natives desire to bring into cultivation, and which may be farmed out at the discretion of persons in office, who were very willing to encourage agricultural speculations, when they could derive benefit from them. Whether they will be so ready to oblige the *ryots* (farmers), now that they are compelled to account for every rupee that passes through their hands, remains to be proved. The two-and-twenty years' servitude required before a pension is granted to retiring officers, scarcely adequate to support them in decency, and insufficient to provide for their families, should be rendered cheerful by the hope that fortune may throw some snug appointment in their way, which may

reconcile them to their tedious exile, and remunerate them for the losses they have sustained through various casualties to which military men are liable, and for which, except when the destruction of property is occasioned by an enemy in the field, the Government refuse to make compensation.

Few officers pass through their military career without having received, directly or indirectly, a hint that they may benefit themselves considerably by the grant of a small favour. One has been offered a large sum of money to permit a rich native anxious to assume the gentleman, to sit in his presence with his shoes on. Had the request been acceded to, the person thus honoured would have attained a degree of consequence amongst his own people to which he was not entitled, and which was of sufficient importance to induce him to purchase it at a high price. Others, known to be upon good terms with the judge, have been solicited to procure decrees in their favour; and it would be always easy for intimate acquaintance, aware, from the circumstances of each case, how the decisions were likely to be made, to take upon themselves the credit of having advocated the cause of the successful party, who would be very ready to pay for a verdict supposed to be thus obtained. Officers

holding staff-appointments have numerous candidates outbidding each other for the subordinate offices, in which natives are always employed ; an indignant rejection will not convince them that they have formed a wrong estimate of the British character ; unabashed, they are ready to make a second trial at any convenient opportunity.

A curious *exposé* took place at a station in the Dooab, at the period that preparations were making for the visit of the Governor General, Lord William Bentinck, to the Upper Provinces. Eight hundred *claishees*, or tent-pitchers, were to be engaged to attend the camp, which was planned in a style of great magnificence. A native employed in the commissariat, in the course of his duty, was directed to find people for the purpose ; his muster-roll was soon completed ; but the visit of the Governor General being postponed until the ensuing year, there was no occasion for the services of the *claishees*. Upon their dismissal, there arose a terrible outcry ; it appeared that eight hundred tent-pitchers, in their anxiety to secure eligible engagements in the train of the *Lord Saib*, had paid, according to their means, for the coveted posts. The worthy personage who had sold these appointments to the best bidders, refused to refund

the money ; the case was brought before the magistrates ; but as it appeared that he had fulfilled his part of the contract in putting their names upon his list, they could not have any redress.

The principal object of curiosity and attention at Allahabad is the fort, which is erected upon the point of land stretching into the waters of the Ganges and Jumna, whose broad currents are united beneath its walls. Though injured in its appearance by the alterations and additions necessary to transform an ancient Moghul castle into a place of strength, according to the modern art of fortification, it still retains somewhat of its oriental and feudal air ; rising in majestic grandeur from the river, whence it may be espied at a very considerable distance. During the rainy season, the currents of the two streams are so rapid, that, with an unfavourable or adverse wind, it is almost impossible to drag up boats, ascending the Ganges, against the rush of these mighty torrents. Many hours are consumed in the struggle ; a delay which, were it not for the toils of the trackers, would be amply compensated by the gratification afforded by a slow approach to a citadel of great interest, both as regards its striking aspect and the skill and science of its engineers. There are low posterns leading

to the glacis facing the river; but the principal entrance of the fort of Allahabad is landward, and is not to be paralleled in magnificence by any building intended for a similar purpose. A noble arched hall, in the gothic style, surmounted by a dome, and enriched with "arabesques of gold and flowers," appears beyond the ample portal, an entrance worthy of the finest citadel in the world. Fort William has nothing to equal it, nor is it inferior to that of the principal gate at Agra, preserved more for show than use, since Government has not considered it expedient to strengthen the walls and make them proof against a cannonade. The interior, containing ranges of buildings, not entirely divested of the beauty of their original architecture, affords, at least during two seasons of the year, some of the most delightful residences to be found in India. A suite of apartments intended for the use of the Governor, but which is sometimes occupied by an inferior officer, commands a splendid view of the Jumna, with its craggy heights and wild sandy shores.

From a balcony perched near the summit of a tower, on which the windows of one of the chambers open, a prospect of singular beauty is obtained. The spectator looks down upon a grove of mango-

trees, flanking a fine esplanade, and peopled with innumerable ring-necked parroquets, which, as the sun glances upon their vivid plumage, dart in and out of the branches like corruscations of emerald light. Above, upon pediment and pinnacle, other bright wanderers of the air erect their crests, and plume their wings, or take their upward flight into fields of gold. Along the thickly-wooded shores of the Allahabad bank, buildings of various degrees of interest are interspersed: on the small islands which rear their sandy platforms above the surface of the river, huge alligators bask; and the opposite shore of Bundelkhund, rising in towering cliffs, crowned with pagodas or the remnants of hill forts, forms a noble back-ground beautifully outlined against the clear blue sky. The interior of the citadel is finely planted; and here, as at Fort William in Calcutta, the confidence reposed by the numerous tribes of birds inhabiting the branches is not permitted to be violated. The slaughter of reptiles is alone allowed within this sanctuary for weak and harmless things; all other animals live in peace, sporting through their little day, secure from wanton aggression.

A state prisoner of considerable importance occupies a suite of apartments destined for the accom-

modation of captives of rank,—the usurping rajah of Bhurtpore, who will, in all probability, finish his career within the walls of the fortress of Allahabad. He is not inaccessible to British visitors: but strangers are not inclined to gratify mere curiosity by staring at the man who, trusting too securely to the supposed impregnability of the strongest native fortress in the East, threw down the gauntlet at a period in which the energies of the Government were directed against the Burmese. The fall of Bhurtpore has totally extinguished the hopes of a warlike race, who, though defeated in many battles, and checked in their victorious career against the Moslem power, vested in the weak emperor of Delhi, still cherished expectations of gaining an ascendancy in territories so often torn from their ancestors by the Persian and the Tartar. It is said that, after the fall of the citadel, those proud and lofty-minded natives, who, galled by defeat, looked insult and defiance upon their Christian rulers, quailed their heads, and became deferential to the conquerors of the Jauts, the most chivalrous warriors of modern India, and the only people of the central provinces who, after the Mahratta war, dared to offer opposition to the British arms.

The fortress of Allahabad is well calculated to keep the belligerent spirits of the upper country in awe; nothing, indeed, save acts of folly and ignorance on the part of new legislators, deeply versed in theories, and bent upon making experiments at any expense, could threaten the destruction of British power in the East; but a change of masters may effect a great deal, and the present generation may very possibly be enlightened upon the subject of mismanagement by the loss of Hindostan.

The cantonments of Allahabad are beautifully picturesque, having a greater diversity of hill and dale than is usually to be found upon the plains of India, and being finely wooded in every direction. The drives are numerous, and there is one leading along the walls of the cemetery, which derives a melancholy interest from the recollections of those who sleep within. India has not unjustly been entitled "Scotland's church-yard;" the Caledonian tenants of the tombs certainly outnumber those of the sister islands, and those of Allahabad have their full proportion of veterans and youths from the green hills and clear streams of North Britain. The gravestones and mausoleums, erected in Anglo-Indian burial-grounds, are peculiar to the country,

and are generally more heavy and ungraceful than the monuments of European churchyards. There are, however, some exceptions; and a broken column at Allahabad, over the resting-place of a Fitzclarence, forms a classic and appropriate memorial of a young man of great promise, cut down in the vigour of his youth. He has left behind him something better—a name linked with gracious deeds; and were the Earl of Munster to return to India as its governor-general, he would find that the courtesies which endeared him and his lamented brother to both native and European residents, have been remembered, and would add to the warmth of his reception.

The undulating surface of the country round Allahabad affords numerous advantageous sites for bungalows, many of which are erected in very excellent situations, commanding views of great beauty. The bungalows themselves are not remarkable for their size or elegance, although the judges belonging to the Sudder Mofussil Adawlut have their head-quarters at this station, and the residence of a considerable body of civilians usually occasions great improvements in the buildings, as they are less in the habit of renting houses than military men, and have larger funds and better

means for constructing and beautifying their mansions. The garrison is small, consisting of not more than two native regiments, one usually an invalided corps, and the artillerymen and engineers requisite for the duties of the fort. The station has never been remarkable for its festivities: yet its balls and parties sometimes attract visitors from the smaller and duller military posts at Chunar, Mirzapore, and Pertaubghur in Oude: the latter a melancholy place, the quarters of a single regiment, whose active spirits are glad to vary a monotonous routine by occasional trips to a gayer scene. There is no theatre at Allahabad, and the chief resource for the gentlemen appears to be a billiard-table, which is the resort of all the idlers of the station. A tolerably well-supported book-club furnishes the more studious with the floating literature of the day, light reading suitable to a warm climate, and to the many who seek for amusement only in the pages of a book.

The rocky character of the bed of the Jumna affords to geologists a field for their pursuits, which they would seek in vain in the muddy alluvial soil watered by the Ganges. Amidst pebbles of little value, interesting and curious specimens of corne-
lians, and stones even more precious, are occasionally

found. The opposite district of Bundelkhund is famous for diamonds, equalling in value and splendour those of the Goleonda mines, and in some particular spots they are found in considerable quantities: all below a certain weight are the property of the persons who may chance to gather them; the larger sort belong to the Rajah of Punna, who is bound to give a certain price, in the event of his claiming the privilege of purchase. The native method of gathering diamonds, which is the least expensive, and perhaps, on that account, the best, is very simple. A few labourers clear a convenient space on a rocky surface, and when it is laid bare, they bring buckets of earth from the places supposed to be most thickly sown with the gems, and sifting it through their hands, easily find the diamonds, which, even in their rough state, are extremely luminous. The hire of the workmen comprises the whole of the outlay, and diligent seekers frequently gather a rich harvest.

A British officer, desirous to set to work upon a large scale, constructed a steam-engine, and other scientific apparatus, at an expense of 30,000 rupees. The vicissitudes of a military life obliged the projector to leave the district before his experiment could be fairly tried; various reports are afloat

concerning the issue, some persons averring that he lost money by the speculation, while others say that it had paid itself before it was finally abandoned. Lucky persons are not always desirous of publishing good fortune, which may encourage competition. The diamonds of Bundelkund are accumulated unostentatiously, but it is supposed that large supplies go down to the native and European jewellers of Calcutta, and the latter have been known to place a lac of rupees at the disposal of persons diligently employed in searching for them. The natives are, of course, the most fortunate gleaners; they are better acquainted with the probable depositaries of the hidden treasure than casual and often unscientific visitors, and they take care to direct attention from the richest beds.

An officer, who had been tolerably successful in his researches, having picked up forty diamonds, of various sizes, in the course of a short period, happening to ride through a wood, espied a man sitting *dhurna* under a tree, nearly naked, and with ashes on his head, in the attitude of mourning assumed by those who, supposing themselves to be aggrieved, determine to work upon the religious prejudices of their oppressors, by remaining without food, and suffering all the inclemencies of the

weather, until death shall release them, or their prayer be granted. Should they die under the infliction of this penance, the weight of their blood is supposed to rest on the head of the person who has driven them to so horrid an expedient. In this event, the spirit of the departed is permitted to revisit earth, and to haunt his obdurate enemy. Many Hindoos are so deeply persuaded of the enormity they commit, in compelling a petitioner to sue to them in this fearful manner, that they do not consider themselves to be at liberty to eat while a person sitting *dhurna* at their gate is fasting. Such scruples of conscience are necessary for the success of the applicant, who is armed with a powerful pleader when his case is advocated by the craving hunger of his adversary. Upon examining the features of the mourner, disguised as they were by dust and ashes, the officer recognized a *chuprassy* who had formerly been in his service. He inquired into the cause of his distress, and learned that it arose from an act of injustice on the part of the rajah of the district, who had seized upon a large diamond which he had been so fortunate as to pick up in his territories, and refused to give him the sum to which he was entitled by law for a stone of that value. Compassionating the poor

fellow's case, and doubtful of the efficacy of the method which he had taken to obtain redress, the officer directed him to come to his tent in the evening, promising his assistance in the prosecution of his claim. The hope, thus kindly held out, revived the drooping spirits of the diamond-merchant, who, in common with other natives, placed implicit confidence in the success of the representations of a *Bellati saib*, and who, from his own experience, was well acquainted with the benevolent disposition of his former master. The judge of the district made one of the travelling party in camp, and he exerted himself so strenuously in the affair, that he procured from the unwilling justice of the rajah the sum of five thousand rupees, a fortune to a poor *chuprassy*. The man was grateful when put into possession of his riches; he appeared at the door of the tent, his mourning rags exchanged for a gala suit, and his countenance beaming with delight. After a thousand salaams, and an oration, in which, in the figurative language of the East, his benefactor was entitled his father and his mother, and the delegate of the Almighty for the performance of good deeds, he departed to enjoy his prosperity in his own village.

The natives of Hindostan, quick in feeling, and

possessed of a strong spirit of independence, will not tamely submit to acts of injustice. They make astonishing efforts to obtain the redress of wrongs, and never yield until they have tried every means within their power to procure the establishment of their rights. It is astonishing how persevering and pertinacious they will be if their cause be good; the rank and station of their oppressors do not deter them from endeavouring to have justice done them, and if it should be refused in one place they will seek it in another. Servants who have been ill-treated, and who fancy that their story may not meet with attention from the head of a small station on good terms with their masters, will quit the place and make their way to the head-quarters of the district, perhaps at the distance of a hundred miles, and lay their cases before the general officer commanding.

A subahdar belonging to a regiment of native cavalry, deprived of the service by an act of injustice, appealed to the local government, who decided the case against him; undiscouraged by the failure, he took his passage on board an English vessel, homeward-bound, and told his story to the Court of Directors. He had a patient hearing, his case was deemed to be a hard one, and he was sent back

with an order to the local government to make a further enquiry into its merits. This the council of Calcutta refused to do; the subahdar, still undismayed, returned to England, and made a second report to the Court of Directors, who despatched a positive command to their representatives in India to see that justice should be done. Thus admonished, the local government awarded a pension of ten rupees a month; but the gallant subahdar indignantly rejected so paltry a recompence for his injuries, and, disgusted with the disappointment of his wish for restoration to his regiment, entered the service of the King of Oude. He was an intelligent and observant man, and his account of what he saw and heard, during his two visits to England, was exceedingly entertaining. In the intervals occurring in the prosecution of his business, he made two long journies, proceeding to Cornwall to visit the children of an officer belonging to his regiment who were placed at school there, and afterwards to Durham to pay his respects to a retired captain of the corps. Both these journies were undertaken through a feeling of strong attachment towards persons who had been kind to him in former days; and this instance forms one of many falling under

the writer's own knowledge, which refute the charge of heartlessness brought against the people of India by individuals who never sought their good-will.

The navigation of the Jumna was formerly much impeded, and rendered exceedingly perilous by the numerous rocks, which either arose above the stream, or lurked treacherously beneath its surface. The removal of these obstacles has been entrusted to some very young engineer officers, despatched from their head-quarters at Allahabad to different points on the river's bank ; they have performed the duty very efficiently, blowing up the rocks in all directions, and deepening the bed of the stream in dangerous shallows. Boats, of the largest size used in inland navigation, may now pass up or down the rapid stream, secure that its strong current will not force them upon some fatal ridge.

The traffic upon the Jumna is very considerable; large quantities of cotton, the growth of the neighbouring districts, are shipped for the Calcutta market, at Humeerpore, Kalpee, Agra, and stations still higher up; the other chief products of the soil, indigo and sugar, also form the loading of numerous vessels; and at Chillah Tarah ghaut,

a thoroughfare of great traffic, goods of all kinds, arriving upon camels from Bombay, by way of Mhow, are embarked for the supply of Bengal.

It is astonishing, with the advantage of such easy communication by the two rivers, to the most distant parts of India, that Allahabad should not have become a commercial and wealthy city, instead of being, as it is, a desolate heap of ruins, tenanted by indigent people, whose numbers and poverty have procured for it amongst their scornful brethren the name of Fakeerabad, or ‘beggar’s abode.’ As it is one of the places pointed out as the probable site of the seat of government, at some not very distant period, there is a chance of its assuming a more prosperous aspect, and of becoming one of the grand emporia for commerce in the upper provinces of Hindostan.

The situation of Allahabad is said to be healthy; but either from its proximity to the two rivers, or the quantity of wood which gives the surrounding country so luxuriant and park-like an appearance, it is more humid than any other place in the Dooab, and is stated to possess a peculiar climate of its own, the hot winds being considerably mitigated, and rain falling at seasons when other parts of the country are dry. The gardens are in consequence

very productive; in those belonging to the British residents, artichokes in particular flourish, attaining a size unknown in less favourable soils in the neighbourhood. The rich tapestry of the jungles, those splendid creepers, which hang their fantastic wreaths upon every adjacent bough, are the great ornament of the pleasure-grounds of Allahabad. The native gardeners train them somewhat formally upon erect bamboos, whence they trail their magnificent garlands down to the ground, forming huge conical mounds, which too frequently bring to mind the May-day spectacle in England, of those moving bowers of green, which appear in the train of the sooty potentates, enjoying their annual *Saturnalia*.

When there are archways or trellis in the gardens, the creepers become a far more graceful decoration. It is unfortunately impossible to twine them round the pillars of the verandahs, without the danger of their affording a harbour for venomous reptiles, and the certainty of their increasing the number of the insects which infest every house. Nothing of the kind is permitted to invite such unwelcome guests; every blade of grass springing in the fructifying season of the rains, being carefully extracted from the soil immediately surrounding

the mansion, lest snakes and other reptiles should glide under the green covert, and insinuate themselves unseen into the chambers, where it is their wont to lie perdue, until aroused or startled from their hiding-places.

The religious creeds, both of Moslem and Hindoo, exhort the rich to plant groves, dig wells, and build public edifices,—acts of charity essential to the comfort of a people living in a country where water, shade, and the shelter of a roof are blessings of incalculable value. The letter of the injunction is strictly regarded by many of the wealthy classes, but its spirit is sadly neglected. Immense sums are lavished upon new buildings, with which the founder hopes to transmit his name to posterity, and which, if not completed in his lifetime, will be left to fall into premature ruin, the heir choosing rather to commence a fresh work than to finish the old one, or to repair the works of others, however elegant in themselves or useful to the public. The banks of the Jumna present many noble ghauts, which are not now available as landing-places, in consequence of the lower steps having given way, and separated themselves from the upper flights, standing out at a distance in the streams. A trifling repair, commenced in time, would have prevented

the mischief; but, though not too late to avert the impending ruin, one by one, the steps will drop away, until the encroaching waters shall swallow up the whole.

Allahabad affords a mournful example of the want of public spirit in the Moosulman population of its neighbourhood. A noble caravanserai, built by Sultan Khosroo, which forms a superb quadrangle, entered by four gothic gateways, and surrounded by cloisters running along the four sides of a battlemented wall, the usual accommodation for travellers offered by an Indian hostel, has been permitted to fall into a state of deplorable decay. The garden adjoining, finely planted with mango-trees, is also in a neglected and deteriorated state; the attention of the government, once directed towards the restoration of the whole, but unfortunately diverted by the breaking out of the Burmese war, has not been recalled to the preservation of remains of great beauty and interest.

Three tombs, erected according to the fine taste displayed by the Mohammedans in the selection of the site of their mausoleums, in this garden, have, from the extraordinary solidity of their construction, escaped the destroying hand of time. Their neglect reflects shame upon the carelessness of those

who can suffer buildings to sink into oblivion, which, in other countries would attract crowds of admiring strangers to descant upon the elegance of their design and the splendour of their execution. Chaste, magnificent, and solemn, they are peculiarly adapted for the purpose to which they have been dedicated, and put to shame the diminutive monuments raised to kings and princes in the cathedrals of the western world. Splendid terraces, forming stately platforms, which, like those of the mausoleums of Agra, are furnished with several apartments below, form the basement story. The central chamber in each contains a stone sarcophagus, in which the mortal remains of the dead are deposited. Above, and occupying the middle of each platform, a circular, dome-crowned hall, finely proportioned and profusely ornamented with rich sculpturing, delights the gazer's eye, who, in their palace-like tombs, sole survivors of the splendour of the Moghuls, is impressed with one of the most amiable traits in the Moslem character—its reverence for the dead and desire to perpetuate the memory of objects beloved in life.

The tombs of Hindostan have proved the most lasting memorials of the wealth, taste, and piety of its Moghul conquerors. While fort and palace

have crumbled away, or have lost their original designs in modern alterations and adaptations, they have remained unchanged; and each succeeding year, in making strangers better acquainted with the architectural beauties of a much-neglected country, will contribute to the establishment of their claims to the admiration of every person possessed of taste and feeling.

A handsome mosque on the bank of the Jumna, at the recommendation of a civilian of eminence, has been put into repair, and restored to its original distinction, as a religious edifice. Upon the subjugation of the province to the British power, it was selected for the residence of the governor of Allahabad, and has since been converted into an assembly-room; but whether, after having been polluted by the introduction of the *burra khana*s of Kafirs, scorers of the prophet and devourers of pork, it can be purified and rendered holy in the eyes of the faithful, is extremely doubtful.

The Jumna bank of Allahabad monopolizes all the interest, that of the Ganges having no particular beauty or merit beyond its common features. The tides of the Jumna, on account of the beds of rock and sand over which they flow, have attractions peculiarly their own; for a considerable dis-

tance after their union with the muddy waters of the superior stream, they retain their brilliant blue, contrasting their crystal currents with the turbid yellow wave with which they are doomed at length to mingle.

CHAPTER II.

CEMETERIES AND FUNERAL OBSEQUIES.

THE dreary character of the European burial-places in British India has already been noticed in many of the preceding pages ; but the subject is of too interesting a nature to be passed over with a few casual remarks.

Strangers, visiting our Eastern territories, cannot fail to be impressed with painful feelings, as they survey the gloomy receptacles appropriated to those Christians who are destined to breathe their last in exile. The portion of ground consecrated and set apart as the final resting-place of the European residents, is seldom sufficiently extensive to give “ ample room and verge enough ” for those who seek repose within its gloomy precincts. All are over-crowded, and many exhibit the most frightful features of a charnel-house, dilapidated tombs, rank vegetation, and unburied bones whitening in the wind. The trees are infested with vultures and other hideous carrion-birds ; huge vampire-bats nestle in the walls, which too often present aper-

tures for the admission of wolves and jackalls crowding to their nightly resort, and tearing up the bodies interred without the expensive precautions necessary to secure them from such frightful desecration. The grave must be deep, covered, in the first place, with heavy planks, and afterwards with solid masonry, to preserve the mouldering inhabitant from the attacks of wild and ravenous beasts. In many places it is necessary to have a guard posted every night, until the foundation of the tomb shall be completed.

It is not often that the admiration of the visitor is excited by the monumental remains of the Christian community in India; they consist, for the most part, of clumsy obelisks, stunted pyramids, nondescript columns of a great confusion of orders, and ill-proportioned pedestals bearing all sorts of urns. The most elegant and appropriate are those which are built in imitation of the inferior class of Mussulmaanee tombs, consisting of a sarcophagus, raised upon an elevated platform, approached by handsome flights of steps, and having a domed roof supported upon pillars. But even when these monuments are as large and as handsome as their models, the effect is injured by the inferiority of the situation. An attractive site is almost invaria-

bly chosen by the Moslem for a place of sepulture. Many of the heights in the neighbourhood of Rajmhal are crowned with mausoleums, which have a fort-like appearance; and it is very rarely, though the disciples of the prophet dwelling in the neighbourhood may be poor and few, that the tomb of a brother is neglected; some pious hand is found to sweep away the dust and litter which would otherwise accumulate around it, and to strew flowers over the remains of its perhaps nameless tenant. Indeed, the reverence for the dead entertained by the Mohammedan natives of India, extends to persons of all countries and religions. They, who in their lifetime have acquired a reputation for the virtues most in esteem amongst Asiatics, will not be forgotten in the grave. More than one Christian tomb has become an object of veneration in India, receiving the same respect and homage which the children of the soil pay to those of their own persuasion who have been esteemed saints. Even Hindoos, though shrinking from contact with a corse will reverence the shrines of the warlike or the virtuous dead.

It is strange that so touching an example has not been followed by the European residents, who, at a very small cost, might render the places of inter-

ment destined for their brethren far less revolting than their present aspect. A few labourers attached to each cemetery would keep the whole in order; and as flowers spring up spontaneously in many places, little care or cultivation would be required to convert the coarse dank grass, which seems to offer a harbour for snakes and other venomous reptiles, into a blooming garden; and though, in consequence of the number of tombs, which are crowded, as in England, into the same enclosure, and their inferiority both in size, design, and beauty of the material, a Christian cemetery never could be rendered so imposing and attractive as those spacious and carefully-tended pleasure-grounds surrounding the mausoleums, which add so much to the architectural displays of India, they might be made more agreeable to the eye, and objects of less horror to those who have little hope of living to return to their native land.

In a country where European stations lie at the distance of many days' march from each other, numerous instances occur of deaths upon journies or in remote places, whence it would be impossible, in consequence of the rapid decomposition produced by the climate, to convey the body to consecrated ground. Upon such occasions, the corse

is usually interred upon the spot, and travellers frequently find those monumental remains in wild and jungly districts, which shew that there the hand of death has overtaken an individual, perchance journeying onwards with the same confidence which animates their own breasts.

The perambulators of the ruined palace of Rajmhal, whose marble halls are left to the exclusive possession of the lizard and the bat, are struck, on entering a court surrounded by picturesque buildings falling fast into decay, with the appearance of two European tombs. The scene is one of desolation and neglect, but it does not display those disgusting images which sicken the spirit in cemeteries, owing their dreariness and desolation to the indifference of the living. The despotic power of time, the fall of earthly splendour, pictured in the forsaken palace of the former rulers of Bengal, harmonize well with the wreck of human hopes, the fragility of human life, illustrated by the lonely Christian monuments rising in that once proud spot, whence the heathen lord and his Mussulman conquerors have passed away for ever. Above, on the summit of a green hill, a marble pedestal, surmounted by an urn, attracts the attention of the voyagers of the Ganges; it is

said to mark the place in which a beautiful young Englishwoman fell a victim to one of those sudden attacks of illness which are so often fatal to new arrivals. This memorial, glittering in the sun, forms a very conspicuous object ; but while telling its melancholy tale, the sad reflections, which are conjured up by the untimely fate of one so young and lovely, are soothed by the conviction that the gentle stranger at least found an appropriate resting-place, amidst a scene of never-fading verdure, where the flowers and the foliage, the birds and the butterflies, are the fairest and brightest which gleam beneath a tropical sun.

The most interesting, though not the most splendid, monument commemorating the virtues of an English resident in India, occurs in the neighbourhood of Rajmhal. It is a cenotaph, of Hindoo architecture, raised by the natives of the adjacent hill districts, to the memory of Augustus Cleveland, who formerly filled the office of judge at Boglipore. Two fakirs are employed to keep a lamp continually burning within the building, and once a-year a festival is held at the spot, the annual celebration of the apotheosis of that highly-reverenced individual, whom the poor people, who were the objects of his benevolent care, regard with feel-

ings nearly approaching to idolatry. Mr. Cleveland died at sea, and his body occupies a neglected spot in a cemetery at Calcutta; but this circumstance appears to be overlooked by both natives and Europeans, who usually suppose that the tomb of Boglipore is the place of his interment.

This excellent person expired in his twenty-ninth year. Few men during so short a life have achieved so much lasting good. Upon his appointment to the office of judge at Boglipore, he became exceedingly interested in the fate and fortunes of the people who inhabited the neighbouring hills, and who, though living under the protection of the British government, were subjected to much oppression and violence from the dwellers in the plains. They are Hindoos, but not of strict caste, polluting themselves with food rejected by their more rigid brethren, and are consequently held in the utmost contempt by the fanatic disciples of Brahma. Repaying the injuries inflicted upon them with rapine and bloodshed, a desolating war had long been carried on between them and the lowland borderers, and Mr. Cleveland was the first person, armed with the means of rescuing them from their degraded condition, who inquired into their situation and circumstances, and endeavoured

to bring them within the pale of civilized society. His efforts were rewarded by success: his unremitting kindness won their confidence; they submitted implicitly to his regulations, and, trusting to his promises of protection, brought the products of their villages to the bazaars he established in places which, in former times, they could only visit at the risk of their lives. These hill-people, destitute as they are of caste, and despised by their arrogant neighbours, possess in a very high degree one virtue, which is wholly unknown to the true Hindoo character,—adherence to truth. Though Asiatics entertain a respect for those on whose veracity they can firmly rely, lying is not esteemed a vice amongst them, and no one convicted of falsehood runs the slightest hazard of incurring contempt: hence, while their fidelity may be depended upon, not the slightest faith can be given to their assurances; they are little scrupulous about perjuring themselves, and though oaths are administered in courts of law, the truth can only be elicited by the most searching cross-examinations.

The mountaineers of this part of the country, notwithstanding the wild and lawless life to which they had been long accustomed, have proved loyal

and orderly subjects; they are not often found in the service of Europeans, being looked upon as pariahs and outcasts by the other domestics of the establishment, whose prejudices are very frequently adopted by their Christian masters; but they are sometimes to be seen amidst the retainers of an Anglo-Indian, and touching instances are related of their fidelity and attachment to those from whom they have received kindness. A medical gentleman being sent for to attend a brother officer in the jungles, found the patient dead, and deserted by all his servants excepting one, a poor fellow from the hills, who remained by the side of the corpse fanning away the flies, and not stirring from his post until the last sad offices were performed. It is pleasing to be able to add, that this meritorious conduct met its reward, The gentleman who obtained so striking a proof of the poor bearer's devotion to his master, took him immediately into his own service, where he was treated with the kindest consideration, and protected from the insolence of the other domestics, who frequently received very mortifying lessons from a master anxious to shew them that he entertained more regard for character than for caste.

There is perhaps no district belonging to India,

which offers more favourable prospects to the missionary ; but, hitherto, little or no attempt has been made to instruct the wild mountaineers of Rajmhal, either in religion, or the agricultural or domestic arts. While disappointment awaits the ambitious invaders of the strong-holds of Hindoo superstition, the promise of an ample harvest is unaccountably neglected, and, excepting the little which can be done by the civil and military authorities at Boglipore, for those immediately under their jurisdiction, a very interesting and intelligent race of people are left without any instruction whatsoever.

The services performed by Mr. Cleveland to the inhabitants of the hills will never be forgotten ; forty years have elapsed since his death, but his memory remains as fresh as ever in the breasts of the descendants of those who were the objects of his benevolence. This affecting trait of character is not, however, confined to the simple and ignorant race scattered along the range of mountains between the Ganges and Burdwan, but is common to all the natives of Hindostan. The reverential regard which all castes entertain for the great Secunder, who, though supposed by the people of India to be the Macedonian hero, was, in all probability, one of

the successors to his divided empire, is manifested in a very striking manner. Though Christian warriors have not obtained so extensive a reputation, the impression which their virtues have made upon the natives is not less deep and lasting.

A tomb, in the neighbourhood of Agra, in which the remains of an European officer, who spent his whole life in the performance of kindly deeds, are deposited, is much venerated by the natives, who bestow upon it the honours of a lamp; and in some part of Bombay, the sentinels on duty present arms at a certain period of the night,—a mark of respect paid to the spirit of an English officer of rank, who was adored by the people he commanded, and who, being now esteemed a saint, is supposed to revisit earth in the glimpses of the moon. Had it been the fortune of Warren Hastings to have found a sepulchre in Bengal, the crowds who now recite verses in his honour, and link his name with enthusiastic blessings, would have assembled annually at his tomb, and rejoiced in the supposition that his spirit still hovered over the land which had rightly appreciated those services which were so shamefully unrequited in his own country.

The circumstances attending the burial of the Christian sojourners of India, who die far from the

dwelling of their European brethren, are often exceedingly melancholy. An incident of a very frightful nature, which I believe has been recorded in some novel illustrative of Anglo-Indian life, occurred about the period of Lord Hastings' government. A civilian, whose duty had taken him into a remote part of his district, was returning home *dàk*, in consequence of an attack of fever, having written to his wife by express to acquaint her with his illness, and the time in which she might expect his arrival. While travelling, he rested during the heat of the day at the *serai* of a native village; and while reposing there, he learned that an European had just breathed his last in an adjoining chamber. Anxious to secure decent interment to the body, which, he was aware, if left to the disposal of strangers of a different religion, entertaining a horror of contaminating themselves by polluting contact with an unclean thing, would be treated very unceremoniously, he struggled with his illness, and attended the remains of his fellow-sufferer to the grave, reading the burial-service appointed by the church over the place of sepulture, and seeing that every requisite ceremony was properly performed. Exhausted by this sad and painful duty, he got into his palanquin, but had not proceeded far

before he was overtaken by the pangs of death : a paroxysm of fever seized him, and he expired on the road. The bearers fled into the woods, leaving their inanimate burthen on the ground, for nothing save the strongest attachment can induce a native of India to touch, or continue with a dead body which does not belong to a person of their own caste. In the meantime, the wife of this unfortunate gentleman, alarmed by the tidings of her husband's illness, had hastened to meet him, and was made acquainted with her loss by the frightful spectacle which met her eyes, the breathless and deserted corse of the object dearest to her lying on the road. She could gain little assistance from her own bearers, whose caste or whose prejudices kept them aloof; and finding it impossible to induce them to touch the body, she sent them to the neighbouring village to summon more efficient aid, taking upon herself the melancholy office of watching the fast decaying remains. She soon found that her utmost strength would be insufficient to repel the daring attacks of hosts of insects, ravenous birds, and savage animals, rushing on their prey, or congregating in the neighbouring thickets, awaiting an advantageous moment for attack; and, in the energy of her despair, she tore away the earth

with her own hands, making a grave large enough to conceal the body from the eyes of its numerous assailants. How this story is told in the work before mentioned, I know not, but I received the present version of it from an intimate friend of the survivor.

During my own residence in Calcutta, a death took place in the jungles in its neighbourhood, attended by very distressing circumstances. It had become absolutely necessary for a gentleman, engaged in the indigo-trade, to pay a visit to a distant factory. The contemplation of this journey was painful in the extreme; though in perfect health, it affected his spirits in so extraordinary a degree, that he could only be induced to undertake it by the severest remonstrances of the members of the mercantile house with which he was connected. Under the most unaccountable dejection of mind, he entered his palanquin, and after having travelled a stage or two, alighted, and, telling his bearers that he would speedily rejoin them, struck into the neighbouring thickets. The men waited for a considerable time, expecting his return, and, unwilling to hurry or intrude upon the privacy of a superior, who would in all probability resent their interference. At length, becoming alarmed, they

reported the circumstance at the next *thannah*, or police-office. The *thannahdar* immediately sent out his people to search the jungle, and in one of its most solitary nooks they found the body of the traveller, lying under a tree, and already half-devoured by the jackalls. The exact circumstances of his death were wrapped in a veil of impenetrable mystery. It was impossible, in the torn and mangled state of the corse, to ascertain whether he had perished by his own hand, or if the surrounding horrors of the scene, the harrowing thoughts crowding on the soul of an exile, and the fearful state of excitement, occasioned by reminiscences of home, to those who, repressing their feelings in public, give loose in solitude to the anguish of their hearts, proved too much for the outward frame, and snapped the fragile thread of life. Nothing farther could be elicited by the strictest inquiry, and the friends and relatives of the deceased were left to the most mournful conjectures.

The impossibility of procuring prompt medical aid, in passing through the country between the European stations, forms a cruel aggravation to the distress of the companions of those who may be taken ill upon a journey. A newly-married bride embarked with her husband, who belonged to the

civil service of the Company, on board a budge-row, with the intent to proceed to Patna, where he had received an appointment. The bridegroom, attacked by illness upon the river, while at a considerable distance from any European dwelling, languished for a few hours and then expired. The servants endeavoured to persuade the sorrowing widow to permit them to land the body and have it interred in the jungle; but to this she would not consent, and immediately betaking themselves to the baggage-boat, they left her alone with the corse. Instead of proceeding on a voyage, whose object had been defeated by the death of the principal person of the party, it was deemed advisable to turn the head of the boat round, and go down the river. The wind unfortunately was adverse, and notwithstanding the strength of the current, the vessel made little progress. Imagination cannot picture any thing more horrible than the office which devolved upon one who remained faithful even in death. The atmosphere soon became so offensive as scarcely to be endurable; the body decayed rapidly; the heat was excessive, and the object for which so much misery had been braved seemed unattainable. No less-devoted heart could have hoped to secure the rites of Christian burial

for the already putrid corpse, yet did this young creature, who, until her melancholy loss, had known hardship and sorrow only by name, resolutely persevere in this dreadful duty. At length, about eight o'clock in the morning of the third day, the boat approached a European dwelling. Upon the first communication with the shore, the inhabitants were apprized that a lady had arrived with the dead body of her husband, and they immediately hastened to the spot to offer her all the consolation and assistance in their power. The master of the house took the corpse under his own charge, and giving the widow over to the care of his wife, issued the necessary orders concerning the interment. It was with some difficulty that the remains could be placed in the coffin hastily prepared for their reception; but it was accomplished at last, and the sad ceremonials proceeded with those decent solemnities which it had cost so much suffering to obtain.

Notwithstanding the little attention which is given in India to the places of sepulture belonging to Christian communities, it is thought necessary to pay marks of respect to the dead, which are often followed by fatal consequences to the living. A very large attendance at the grave, during the performance of the funeral obsequies, is rigorously

exacted by the prejudices of society. Ladies are not, as in England, exempted from this painful duty ; at the death of a female friend their presence at the period of interment is expected, and their neglecting to appear, without adequate cause, is construed into a mark of disrespect. The nearest relation of the deceased has been known, on his return from the burial of the most beloved object in the world, to count over the absentees, and descant upon their evasion of so sacred an obligation, while the commentator might with more justice be accused of indifference to the effects of a scene upon female sensibility, which has sometimes proved too harrowing for the feelings of the stronger sex. Illness and even death have been the result of attendance at the last melancholy rites performed to a brother exile committed to foreign earth ; the shock sustained by new arrivals is often of a dangerous nature, especially amongst the uneducated classes of society. A detachment of recruits, injudiciously commanded to follow the bodies of their comrades to the grave, afforded, during my sojourn at a Mofussil station, convincing proof of the effect of mind upon matter. Ten or twelve dropped during the service ; several of these were taken up dead, and of the number conveyed to the hospital,

not more than one recovered. The solemn office performed at funerals has often proved a death-warrant to the living, especially when surrounded by all the distressing circumstances with which it is frequently invested in India. The sudden nature of the dissolution, the necessary rapidity of the interment, deepen the horror of those who see their friends and acquaintances snatched from them by an invisible hand, and who are thus warned that danger is lurking abroad where they least expected to find it.

The undertakers of Calcutta are accustomed to send circular printed notices of funerals, filled up with the name of the deceased, to the houses of those persons who are expected to attend. This is probably the first intimation which many dear and attached friends obtain of their loss. On one occasion, a gentleman, after a few hours' absence from home, found on the hall-table a black-edged ominous missive of this kind, which acquainted him with the death of an individual whom he regarded with affection surpassing that of a brother, and with whom he had parted the preceding evening in perfect health. He rushed to the house where he was wont to meet with the most cordial welcome from lips now closed for ever, and only arrived in

time to take a last view of the insensible remains. The officials were almost in the act of nailing the lid of the coffin down as he entered, preparatory to its committal to the hearse, and in the course of another hour he was standing suffocated with grief beside the grave of his dearest friend.

The sensibilities of many persons are so much affected by the sight of the funeral processions, which almost every evening wend their way to the burial-ground of Calcutta, as to render them unwilling to live in Park Street, the avenue which leads to it. This cemetery occupies a large tract of ground on the outskirts of the fashionable suburb, Chowringee. Beyond it, the waste jungly space, partially covered with native huts, and intersected by pools of stagnant water, adds to the desolate air of the enclosure, with its tasteless and ill-kept monuments. The scene is calculated to inspire the most gloomy emotions, and it is saying a great deal for the fortitude displayed by females, that no instance is recorded of their sinking under the combination of depressing circumstances which must weigh upon their imaginations, when they are compelled to appear in person as mourners. The office of bearing the pall devolves upon the dearest friends of the deceased, who, upon alighting from their

carriages at the porch of the burial-ground, arrange themselves in the melancholy order which has been pointed out to them. Funerals always take place at sunset; and in the rainy season the state of the atmosphere, and the dampness of the ground, materially increase the perils to be encountered by delicate women, exposed to mental and bodily suffering in a manner considered so unnecessary in the land of their birth. But the rules established by Anglo-Indian society are absolute, and must be complied with, upon pain of outlawry.

In former times, the burial-ground belonging to the cathedral was the only place of interment in Calcutta; but funerals have long been discontinued in this part of the city. "Before the commencement of the year 1802," says the monumental register, "the tombs in this cemetery had fallen into irreparable decay; and to prevent any dangerous accident which the tottering ruins threatened to such as approached them, it was deemed necessary to pull down most of them. The stone and marble tablets were carefully cleared from the rubbish, and laid against the wall of the cemetery, where they now stand." Our chronicler, however, does not go on to say that this act of desecration,

the work of the reverend gentleman at the head of clerical affairs, gave great umbrage to the Christian population of Calcutta, who, though perchance in some degree answerable for the consequences of the neglect which produced the ruin above described, became exceedingly incensed at the root-and-branch work, considered expedient to level the church-yard, and get rid of all its incumbrances.

One of the monuments thus ruthlessly removed, had been erected to the memory of Governor Job Charnock, the founder of the most splendid British settlement in the world. The chequered fortunes of this hardy adventurer are too well-known to all who take an interest in the proceedings of the early Indian colonists, to need any notice here. He died on the 10th January 1692. "If," says our chronicler, "the dead knew any thing of the living, and could behold with mortal feelings this sublunary world, with what sensations would the father of Calcutta glow to look down this day upon his city!" The private life of Governor Charnock presents a romantic incident not very uncommon at the period in which he flourished. Abolishing the rite of suttee, in a more summary manner than has been considered politic by his successors, he, struck by the charms of a young Hindoo female about to

be sacrificed for the eternal welfare of her husband, directed his guards to rescue the unwilling victim from the pile. They obeyed, and conveying the widow, who happened to be exceedingly beautiful, and not more than fifteen years old, to his house, he took her under his protection, and an attachment thus hastily formed lasted until the time of her death, many years afterwards. Notwithstanding the loss of caste, which the lady sustained in exchanging a frightful sacrifice for a life of splendid luxury, the governor does not seem to have been at any pains to induce her to embrace Christianity. On the contrary, he himself appears to have been strangely imbued with pagan superstitions, for, having erected a mausoleum for the reception of the body, he ordered the sacrifice of a cock to her manes on the anniversary of her death, and this custom was continued until he was also gathered to his fathers. This mausoleum, one of the oldest pieces of masonry in Calcutta, is still in existence. Monuments of the like nature, with the exception of the annual slaughter of an animal, are to be seen in many parts of India; connexions between Indian women and English gentlemen of rank and education being often of the tenderest and most enduring description. Nor do these unions excite

the horror and indignation amongst the natives that might be expected from their intolerant character; so far from it, indeed, that in many instances they have been known to offer public testimonials of their respect to those who have been faithful in their attachments throughout a series of years.

There is a very beautiful mausoleum, which attracts the visitor's eye in the immediate neighbourhood of a large native city, erected to the honour of a Moosulmanee lady, who lived for forty years with a civilian attached to the adjacent station; some of the rich inhabitants of the city, desirous to shew the opinion they entertained of the conduct of both parties, presented a canopy of cloth of gold, richly embroidered, of the value of £1,000, to be placed, according to native custom, over the sarcophagus. That native women do not consider their seclusion from the world as any hardship, is plainly evinced by the mode of life which they voluntarily adopt on becoming the nominal wives of Englishmen. In most cases (always, if they have been respectable before their entrance into his family), they confine themselves as strictly to the *xenana* of their Christian protector, as if the marriage had taken place according to their

own forms and ceremonies; and, excepting in a few instances, where they adopt the externals of Christianity, they never make their appearance abroad, but act in all respects as they would deem becoming in the lawful wife of a Mussulman or Hindoo of rank. This of course does not hold good with the lower orders, Ayahs, and others, who, having already forfeited their characters by publicly associating with men, have no respectability to keep up, and act openly in the most profligate manner.

One of the few monuments permitted to remain is of a very interesting character, and consists of fourteen pillars, raised to the memory of the same number of British officers who fell under General Abercrombie, about four-and-thirty years ago, in a dreadful conflict with the Rohillas. Upon this occasion, the Company's troops were left to fight single-handed; for, although their allies, composed of 30,000 men, were brought into the field by the Nawáb of Lucknow, they remained quiet spectators of the fray until victory had decided for the English: so high did the character of the Rohillas stand, that the men of Oude dared not take part against them without being assured of their defeat. An obelisk is raised upon the spot where these de-

voted soldiers fell; and the glory of this splendid action is further commemorated by the alteration of the name of the village in Bohilcund, which was the scene of the battle: it was formerly called *Beetora*, but is now styled by the natives *Fetty gunge*, the 'place of victory.'

A few European residents in India have provided for the accommodation of their remains after death, by building their own tombs. Colonel Skinner, the commandant of the most distinguished corps of irregular horse in the Company's service, an officer not less celebrated for his gallantry in the field than for the splendour of his hospitality, has erected in the centre of a blooming garden, at his jaghira at Balaspore, a mausoleum of a very tasteful and elegant description, destined to contain the "mortal coil," when his chivalric spirit shall have fled. He is thus secure of a worthy resting-place, which is not always the case with those, however wealthy, who are content with leaving directions respecting their interment in their wills.

General Claude Martin, who has been not unjustly styled "a brave, ambitious, fortunate, and munificent Frenchman," having from a private soldier risen to the highest rank in the Company's

army, constructed a tomb for himself in the underground floor of a grotesquely magnificent house, which he built at Lucknow. The body is deposited in a handsome altar-shaped sarcophagus of white marble, surmounted by a marble bust, and inscribed with a few lines, which do credit to his modesty: "Major-General Claude Martin, born at Lyons, January 1738; arrived in India as a common soldier, and died at Lucknow on the 15th of September 1800. Pray for his soul!" Surrounding the tomb stand four figures of grenadiers, as large as life, with their arms reversed, in the striking and expressive attitude used at military funerals; but the effect of this groupe is completely marred by the substitution of mean plaister effigies for the marble statues which General Martin intended should have formed the appropriate appendages of his monument. A large proportion of the property of this fortunate adventurer was devoted to charitable purposes, which, according to the prevailing notions on the subject of political economy, do more honour to the hearts than the heads of testators. Such doctrines, however, would be at present extremely ill-understood in India, where the wisdom which would withhold succour

to the poor, the aged, and the infirm, requires a much more intimate acquaintance with the school-master to be properly appreciated.

In some of the very small European stations, no piece of consecrated ground has yet been set apart, as the final depository of those who are destined to draw their last breath in exile. Though not always particularly ornamental in the immediate neighbourhood of a dwelling-house, the clumsy obelisks and ill-proportioned pyramids, reared over the bodies of the dead, form very interesting memorials to those who entertain a pious feeling towards their departed brethren. Tombs not unfrequently occur in the gardens and pleasure-grounds of the habitations of British residents, in the remote parts of the Upper Provinces, where they have a much better chance of being kept in good repair than in the crowded charnels of more populous places. The only inconvenience which ever arises from a close vicinity to the mansions of the dead, is occasioned by the superstition of the natives, whose notions regarding spirits are of the strangest and most unaccountable nature imaginable. Many do not object to take up their own abode in a sepulchre. There is nothing extraordinary in the metamorphosis of a Moosulmanee tomb into the residence of

an English gentleman, many choosing to appropriate the spacious apartments, so needlessly provided for the dead, to the accommodation of the living. This sort of desecration is not objected to on the part of the Indian servants of the household, neither do they seem to entertain any fears of the resentment of the spirit whose quiet is thus disturbed; sometimes, as in the case of the sentinels before-mentioned, who present arms at a certain hour of the night, under the idea that they are doing honour to the disembodied soul of a distinguished individual, they rejoice in the supposition that they hold communion with departed spirits; but in many instances they appear to be governed by the most arbitrary feelings.

A bungalow in Bundelkhund was invariably deserted at sunset by all the servants of the establishment, notwithstanding their attachment to a very indulgent master, in consequence of a Christian infant, of some three or four years old, having been buried in the garden. It was said that the ghost of this poor child walked, and at a particular period of the night approached the house and made a modest demand for bread and butter,—an incident too full of horror to be borne! There was no

remedy against the panic occasioned by this notion. The bungalow occupied a wild and desolate site on the top of a steep hill, infested by tigers and other savage beasts; and every night its solitary European inhabitant was left to the enjoyment of the wild serenades of these amateur performers, the servants decamping *en masse* to the village at its base.

In many parts of India, the natives fill *gurrabs* of water from the Ganges, and hang them on the boughs of the peepul trees, supposed to be haunted by the spirits of the dead, in order that they may drink of the sacred stream; but the expedient of laying a piece of bread and butter on the hungry infant's tomb does not appear to have occurred to the alarmed domestics. Many European houses in India are deserted in consequence of the reputation they have obtained of being haunted. But ghosts are not the only intruders dreaded by a superstitious people; demons disturb the peace of some families, and as there is no contending against the powers of darkness, the inhabitants are compelled to quit their residences, and give them up to desolation and decay. A splendid mansion on the Chowringee road, to which some ridiculous legend is attached, is untenanted and falling into ruin. No one can

be found to occupy it ; the windows have deserted their frames, the doors hang loosely upon one hinge, rank grass has sprung up in its deserted courts, and fringed the projecting cornices, while the whole affords a ghastly spectacle, and seems the fitting haunt of vampires and of ghoules.

The inscriptions upon the monumental remains of India are generally distinguished for their simplicity and plain good sense ; sometimes, as in country church-yards at home, the grief of the survivors will outrun their discretion, and produce ludicrous expressions sadly out of place ; occasionally also, the epitaphs are rather too ostentatious, but the greater proportion of tomb-stones, covering the dust of the Christian population, merely bear the name of the person who sleeps beneath, and the date of the period of their erection. In no instance is there any striking display of literary talent, and many of the most distinguished servants of the Company are suffered to repose without any written record of their public or private merits. The cemeteries of India, however, present numerous affecting testimonials of the reverential regard felt by the brother officers, of the brave youth who have perished untimely in the service of their country ; some of the handsomest and proudest of

these monumental remains have been raised by sorrowing comrades to young men scarcely beyond the age of boyhood, endeared to society by their domestic virtues, or challenging the applause of the world by some gallant action. Subscriptions for the erection of a tomb over the grave of a brother in arms, are common in the corps of the native army, and the most circumscribed burial-grounds are rarely without one or more of these tributes to departed virtue.

The residents of Madras have set the example of employing eminent English sculptors for the monuments raised to those whom they desire to honour. One, to the memory of Dr. Anderson, in St. George's Church, the work of Chantrey, is described to be a noble specimen of art; but though it would be comparatively easy to decorate the three presidencies with the labours of British chisels, the Upper Provinces must, for a very long period to come, depend upon the exertion of native talent. Though busts and statues could not at present be produced by Asiatic hands, there would be no difficulty in procuring an exact representation of the most beautiful models which taste could design.

CHAPTER III.

MONGHYR.

BEFORE our conquests in India had extended themselves throughout the whole of Hindostan, Monghyr, which in the time of the Moghuls was considered a place of great importance, formed one of the principal military stations of the British army. While it was selected for the depôt for ammunition, since removed to Allahabad, it enjoyed all the honours of a frontier-fortress ; but, in consequence of the immense portion of territory which now divides it from the boundaries of our possessions, it has been suffered to fall into decay. A few invalided soldiers garrison the dismantled citadel, which has been turned into an asylum for lunatics belonging to the native army, and a depôt for military clothing, the tailors in the neighbourhood being considered particularly expert.

Monghyr is situated upon a rocky promontory abutting into the Ganges, and the walls of the fort, raised upon a sharp angle, have a fine effect : the point on which they stand, when the river is full

and the current strong, renders the navigation difficult and dangerous to boats, which can only pass with a favourable wind, and run great risk of being driven against the rocks. The Ganges at this place is extremely wide, appearing almost like a sea; and vessels being often detained by contrary winds at the ghauts of Monghyr, when a change takes place, the whole surface of the water is covered with barks of every description. The distance from Calcutta is about two hundred and seventy miles, and nothing can exceed the beauty of the situation. The remains of the fort are very striking; the plain is diversified by ridges of rock richly wooded, and upon some of the most favourable sites the European residents have erected those palace-like houses which give a regal air to the splendid landscapes of Bengal. The native town is irregular, and in many parts extremely picturesque, several of the bazaars stretching in long lines beneath the umbrageous shelter of magnificent groves. At the south and eastern gates of the fort there are streets, composed of brick houses, sufficiently wide for carriages to pass; but the remainder consists of scattered dwellings, chiefly built of mud. The place of worship in most repute amongst the Mahomedans is the monument of Peer Shah Lohauni, which is held in

great reverence by all classes of the people, the Hindoos making frequent offerings at the shrine of this saint, so highly is his memory venerated throughout the district.

A considerable trade is carried on at Monghyr, from the manufactories of the place ; the workmen possess considerable skill, and construct palanquins, European carriages, and furniture, in a very creditable manner. Under the inspection of persons well acquainted with these arts, they can produce goods of a very superior description, and at an astonishingly low price. A well-carved, high-backed arm-chair, with a split cane seat, was obtained by the writer for six rupees (12s.). The clothing for the army is made here ; and it is celebrated for its shoes, both of the Native and European forms. But the most famous of its manufactures is that of the blacksmiths, who work up steel and iron into a great variety of forms : these goods are coarse, and not of the very best description ; but they are useful, especially to the natives, and remarkably cheap. Double-barrelled guns are sold for thirty-two rupees each, rifles at thirty, and table knives and forks at six rupees per dozen. Upon the arrival of a budgerow at Monghyr, the native vendors of almost innumerable commodities

repair to the waterside in crowds, establishing a sort of fair upon the spot. Cages filled with specimens of rare birds from the hills, or with the more interesting of the reptiles, such as chameleons; chairs, tables, work-boxes, baskets, and cutlery of all kinds, are brought down to tempt the new arrivals; and few boats pass up the river, having strangers to the country on board, without furnishing customers to these industrious people. Young men, especially, who have not supplied themselves with the *chef d'œuvres* of Egg or Manton, risk the loss of life or limb by the purchase of rifles for tiger-shooting, which, to inexperienced eyes, have a very fair appearance, being only rather slight in the stock, and weak and irregular in the screws. It is perhaps safest to confine the purchases to iron goods of native construction; spears, which are necessary articles in the upper country, are of the best kind, and are sold at twenty annas (about 1s. 4d.) each; an inferior sort may be obtained for fourteen annas; and the *ungeetahs*, iron tripods in which charcoal is burned, are excellent. The only things that are wanting to improve the quality of the steel are a superior method of smelting, and a higher degree of labour bestowed on the anvil: the guns are not warranted not to burst, and it is not

very difficult either to break or to bend the knives. The art has been followed in Monghyr from time immemorial, the Vulcan of the Hindoo mythology having been supposed to have set up his forge at this place.

Since the importation of European fashions, a vast number of new articles have been introduced into the shops of the natives ; tea-kettles, tea-trays, toasting-forks, saucepans, and other culinary vessels unknown in the kitchens of the Moslem or Hindoo, are exhibited for sale ; and both the ghaut, when vessels are passing up and down, and the bazaars, present a very lively scene, from the variety of the commodities and the gay costumes of the people.

In the changes which are now taking place in British India, Monghyr will, in all probability, be made to rival Sheffield or Birmingham in its manufactures ; and it is rather extraordinary that no European cutler or gunsmith has yet been tempted to open a shop in this place. There would be no difficulty in rendering native workmen quite equal to those of England ; and as the prejudices formerly entertained by the Anglo-Indian community against the imitation of European manufactures by less-practised hands is fast giving way, the

guns and knives of Monghyr would be as much sought after as the saddles and harness of Cawnpore.

The establishment of manufactures in India would afford the best method of employing British capital, for natives of respectability, though not objecting to the occupation of merchants, and willing to sell every article that may be consigned to them, consider it to be *infra dig*, to superintend the mechanical part. Hence the artisans of India, left to their own resources, are unable to make any improvements in their art which will incur additional expense. The excellence of the workmanship of those employed in the service of Europeans, show how easily they can be trained to any mechanical employment when under the superintendence of scientific persons.

The fort of Monghyr occupies a large portion of ground, and though no longer affording any idea of a place of defence, is both striking and ornamental. It has not, like Allahabad, been ever modernized, or adapted to the prevailing system of warfare, but retains all its Asiatic character. Within the walls there is a plain of considerable extent, sprinkled with some majestic trees, and having two large tanks of water, the most considerable cover-

ing a couple of acres. The part which faces the river commands a splendid view, the distance being bounded by the ranges of the Rajmhal and Gurruckpore hills, which embay the Ganges on either side.

In addition to the invalided soldiers of the native army, there are a few European veterans settled in Monghyr, pensioners of the Company, who have relinquished all thoughts of home, and are content to spend the remainder of their days in the country which they entered in early youth. They have the choice of residence at four stations, Monghyr, Buxar, Chunar, or Moorshedabad ; and the latter, it is said, is selected by the disreputable characters amongst these old soldiers, who are, however, sometimes very capricious, changing frequently before they can satisfy themselves which is the best and most agreeable retreat for their declining years. Officers upon the invalid establishment have a wider latitude, and obtain leave very easily to reside in any place which may suit them ; they are not allowed to retire to Europe, nor does their promotion go on from the period of their quitting active service ; but they have the full pay of their rank, and it affords an honourable provision for many, even young officers, who have not health or incli- ➤

nation for the performance of military duties ; nor does a retirement upon the invalid establishment utterly extinguish hope, since there are several staff-appointments attached to it, to which those who can make interest at head-quarters may look up. The invalided native soldier is one of the happiest and most contented persons in the world. He reaps the reward of all his previous toil, sits down to the enjoyment of untroubled rest with a competence sufficient to provide him with the comforts of life, and with the consciousness of occupying a respectable station in society. The profession of a soldier is in India considered highly honourable ; so far from feeling degraded by the livery of war, it is the reward of good conduct, in a discharged sepoy, to be permitted to carry his uniform away with him to his native village, where it is worn upon great occasions, and commands the respect of all his associates.

The European society at Monghyr is rather limited, and in consequence of the major part being composed of persons belonging to the invalid establishment, who seek it as a place of retirement, the station is never a scene of gaiety : there are, however, appointments which are held by civil and military servants of the Company, who form a

little circle amongst themselves, which is enlivened occasionally by the visits of strangers passing up and down, and officers upon military duty, surveys, &c. from Dinapore, which is situated at an easy distance. The attractions of Monghyr, as a residence, must be, notwithstanding the temporary sojourn of guests, confined to the scenery, which combines every beauty that the rich and fertile provinces on either side can produce. The gently-rising hills and rocky ledges which diversify the landscape, offer new features to the traveller, who perchance has begun to weary of the flatness of the plains below, notwithstanding their magnificent embellishments of temples, groves, and palaces. About five miles from Monghyr there are some hot springs, which few people fail to visit who remain long enough at the place to make the excursion. They are situated at Seeta-coond, 'well of Seeta,' and though not possessing any medical properties, the water is much sought after on account of its great purity. The springs are enclosed in a cistern of brick, eighteen feet square. The temperature is so hot as to cause death to any animal venturing into it. There is a record of an European soldier who attempted to swim across, but was so miserably scalded as not to survive the perilous exploit. There

is a difference in the degrees of heat at different periods, but the highest point to which the thermometer has risen upon immersion is said to be 163°. Persons travelling down the country, with the intention of returning to England, generally provide themselves with several dozens of bottles of the water from Seeta-coond, to serve as sea stock. It is the greatest luxury which can be imagined on board ship, where the quantity of the fresh element is limited, and where its quality is usually of the worst description. The well at Seeta-coond is sacred, and several brahmins are established in its neighbourhood, who are not above receiving a rupee from the Christian visitants: there appears to be no pollution in money; they, who would not touch an article of furniture belonging to persons of low or impure caste, have no hesitation where gold and silver coins are concerned—an inconsistency which, when pointed out to these scrupulous persons, they vainly attempt to justify.

The ground in the neighbourhood of these springs is exceedingly rocky, and furnishes many curious geological specimens; fluor and mica are plentiful, and *ubruc*, talc, or *lapis specularis*, also is very common. It is found in large masses, which divide easily into tough thin laminæ, perfectly

transparent. Formerly this substance was much in request with Europeans as a substitute for window-glass, but it is not now ever used for that purpose. It still forms the principal material for the ornamental portion of the decorations at native festivals, and when painted with a variety of colours, and illuminated, it is often employed in the construction of mimic palaces, rivalling that of Aladdin, or, as he is styled in India, Alla-ud-deen, in splendour. The hills in the distance are chiefly composed of lime-stone, far advanced in decomposition; they are exceedingly wild in their appearance, and inhabited by numerous tribes of savage animals. The passes of these elevations are infested with tigers, and travellers compelled to tread their labyrinths, encounter great risks. It is said that, when one of these ferocious animals lies in wait for a string of passengers, he usually selects the last of the party; and, under this impression, the palanquin and banghie bearers huddle together, keeping as close to each other as possible, in order to prevent their enemy from singling out a straggler for his meal. In solitary houses in this district, a tiger has been known in the evening, when the doors and windows happened not to be sufficiently secured, to walk into the central apartment,

a strange unbidden guest : this is no very uncommon occurrence in the *dák* bungalows, erected by government for the accommodation of passengers proceeding to the upper country by the new road, which, between Calcutta and Benares, is cut through the jungle, which shortens the distance, but renders it extremely dangerous.

Bears are very numerous in these hills; and their size, strength, and exceeding fierceness, render them little less formidable than the tiger. However, young men, too fond of sport to be deterred by any peril, sometimes amuse themselves during the brief rest which the *dák* bungalows offer, by going out in search of this kind of game, and frequently with great success. An officer climbing to the top of the rocks with his gun, in the neighbourhood of the post-house, shot two enormous bears, and in the course of an hour carried off their skins in triumph on the top of his palanquin. The bearers of adventurous characters, such as the one just named, have sometimes to convey extraordinary kinds of luggage, or the human traveller is accompanied by four-footed friends as outside passengers. An officer, going down *dák* to Calcutta from Bhurt-pore, carried a young tiger in a cage strapped upon the roof of his vehicle, a ravenous attendant,

which made sad havoc amongst the few fowls, sole tenants of the farm-yard of the not overpaid official who acts as *khansamah* at these scantily-furnished hotels. Animals of smaller dimensions, and less-devouring propensities, such as civet-cats, porcupines, &c., journey very safely and quietly in this manner, and the bearers never object to such an addition to the party. Without daring the terrors of the wild forests of Rajmhal, the visitors to Seeta-coond may form a very lively idea of the savage nature of their fastnesses, the rocky jungle, whose deep ravines are surrounded by unfathomable woods.

The neighbourhood of Monghyr is in a very high state of cultivation; and though tigers are to be found by those who seek them in their native haunts, they rarely presume to make their appearance in the inhabited districts. The roads are kept in good order; and the drives, especially that to Seeta-coond, exceedingly picturesque. Part of the way winds through narrow valleys enclosed on either side by rocky elevations, feathered from the summit to the base, the lofty tara palm trees springing above the rest, beautifully defined against the rich crimson of an eastern sky. On one or two of these eminences, a splendid mansion spreads its

white wings, adding architectural beauty to the sylvan scenery.

In the cold season, Monghyr may be truly denominated a paradise, since there is nothing at other periods save the heat of the climate to detract from its enchantments. On the frontiers of Bengal and Behar, and scarcely belonging to either, the district in which it stands, and which is known by the natives under the name of Jungleterry, partakes of the characteristics of the lower and the upper country; the verdure of Bengal lingers on the borders of Hindostan proper, while the low flat plains of the former yield to the undulations which diversify the high table-land stretching to the Himalaya, and which is intersected by numerous valleys or ravines, presenting passes full of romantic beauty.

Splendour of scenery, in a country in which, during many months of the year, its enjoyment must be confined to a short period, morning and evening, before the sun has risen and after it has set, does not compensate for the absence of society, the only gratification which can render India tolerable to those who have no absorbing pursuit; and consequently Monghyr is more desired as a temporary than a settled residence. Travellers, or visitors upon duty, who only see the brightest side

of the picture, are charmed with the beauty of the landscape, and the gaiety of the native groups which give animation to the scene. It is a delightful place for a standing camp, affording delicious shade for canvas habitations, and shelter from those piercing winds which, sweeping over bare plains, are so severely felt in tents, which have not any security against their force.

A civilian, accompanied by his family, in the tour of his district, took possession of a beautiful spot in the neighbourhood of Monghyr. According to the Eastern custom, he was attended by a numerous train of dependents, whose establishments, together with his own, occupied a considerable space of ground. Amongst the domestic pets belonging to his family was a grey, black-faced monkey, with long arms and a long tail, which, on account of his mischievous propensities, was always kept chained to a post on which the hut which defended him from the inclemency of the weather was erected. One morning the wife of the civilian, who frequently amused herself with watching the antics of this animal, observed another monkey of the same species playing with the prisoner; she instantly sent round to the people in the camp to inquire whose monkey (for there are frequently

several attached to one household) had got loose, and to desire that it might be instantly chained up. She was told that no one had brought a monkey with them, and that the creature which she had seen must be a stranger from the woods. An interesting scene now took place between the new acquaintance. After much jabbering and chattering, the wild monkey arose to go, and finding that his friend did not accompany him, returned, and taking him round the neck, urged him along: he went willingly the length of the chain, but then, prevented by stern necessity, he paused. In the course of a short time, the strange monkey seemed to comprehend the cause of his friend's detention, and grasping the chain, endeavoured to break it; the attempt was unsuccessful, and after several ineffectual efforts, both sate down in the attitude which the natives of India seem to have borrowed from these denizens of the woods, and making many piteous gesticulations, appeared to wring their hands and weep in despair. Night closed upon the interview, but the next day it was renewed, and now the monkey community was increased to three. Desirous to know where these creatures came from, the lady made inquiries of the natives of the place; but they unanimously

agreed in declaring, that there was not, to their knowledge, a monkey tope belonging to the same species within a hundred miles. The most eager desire was manifested by the new comers to release the prisoner from his bondage: at first, as upon the former occasion, the arts of persuasion were tried; force was next resorted to, and, in the end, doleful exclamations, jabbering of the most pathetic description, and tears.

On the following day, four or five monkeys made their appearance, and many were the discussions which appeared to take place between them; they tried to drag the captive up a tree, but the cruel chain still interposing, they seemed completely at their wits' end, uttering piercing lamentations, or so roughly endeavouring to effect a release, as to endanger the life of their friend. Pleased with the affectionate solicitude displayed by these monkeys, and sympathizing in their disappointment, the lady, after having amused herself for a considerable period by watching their manoeuvres, ordered one of the servants to let the monkey loose. The moment the party perceived that his freedom was effected, their joy was unbounded; embracing him many times, they gambolled and capered about with delight, and finally, seizing the emancipated

prisoner by the arm, ran off with him to the woods, and were never seen again, not one of the same species appearing during the time the party remained in camp; thus corroborating the evidence of the natives, who persisted in declaring, that grey, black-faced monkeys, with long arms, were not inhabitants of the district.

A circumstance, somewhat similar, and equally authentic, which took place on the Madras side of India, related to the writer by an officer of rank to whom it occurred, may amuse those who take an interest in inquiring into the habits and manners of a race which, together with the conformation, seem to partake of the caprices and inconsistencies of man. Near to the bungalow in which the officer resided, and which had been newly erected in a jungly district, a troop of monkeys were in the habit of crossing the road daily, on their way to the neighbouring woods. On one of these occasions, a sepoy, perceiving the amusement which they afforded to his officer, caught a young one, and brought it to the house, where it remained fastened to one of the pillars of the verandah. The parents of this monkey were soon perceived to take up a position on a ledge of rocks opposite, but at some distance, where they could obtain a view of

their imprisoned offspring, and there they sate all day, sometimes apparently absorbed in silent despair, at others breaking out into paroxysms of grief. This lasted for a long time; days passed away without reconciling the parents to their loss; the same scene was enacted, the same sorrow evinced; and being of a compassionate disposition, the young officer took pity upon the misery of the bereaved pair, and gave his captive liberty. Anticipating the contemplation of the greatest delight at the meeting, he looked out to the rock whither the young monkey instantly repaired, but instead of the happy reunion which his fancy had painted, a catastrophe of the most tragic nature ensued. Seizing the truant in their arms, the old monkeys tore it to pieces in an instant; thus destroying at once the pleasurable sensations of the spectator, and perplexing him with vain conjectures whether, irritated by their previous distress, they had avenged themselves upon its cause, or whether, in the delirium of their joy, they had too roughly caressed the object of their lamentations. Having committed this strangely cruel act, the monkeys took their departure.

Amid the interesting places in the neighbourhood of Monghyr, the celebrated rock of Jungheera

must not be omitted. It consists of several masses of grey granite, rising boldly from the river. It is supposed to have formerly been a point of land projecting from the shore, but it is now completely isolated by the violence of the current, which rushes down in the rainy season with extraordinary vehemence and rapidity. Trees have imbedded their roots amid the crevices of this picturesque rock, and on its terraces several small temples are erected, adding much to the romantic beauty of the scene. It has been during many ages considered one of the most sacred places in the Ganges, and is a great resort of Hindoo devotees, who crowd to it, not only on account of its reputed sanctity, but to offer their homage at the shrine of Narayan, an idol of great celebrity at this place, whose figure, besides being preserved in one of the pagodas, is sculptured upon several parts of the rock, together with those of Vishnu, Seeva, and Sirooj. Jungheera is inhabited by Hindoo fakeers, who are not above asking charity of the European voyagers on the river, but who will not condescend to accept copper money from them. Passing Jungheera in the rains, when the Ganges runs roaring through the rocks with great noise and violence, a sensation of danger is added to the sublimity of the landscape; but when

the river is low, and its turbulence has abated, nothing can be more calm and lovely than the scene.

Between the two rocks, there is a ghaut or landing-place, gently sloping into the water, and never without a cluster of those graceful figures, which in this picturesque country form themselves so readily into groupes, such as artists delight to sketch, a sort of *tableaux vivans*, which must be vainly sought amidst the peasantry of England. From this ghaut the ascent to the summit is by flights of steps cut out of the solid rock. In the temple, which crowns this height, the principal fakeer is usually to be seen, sitting on a tiger-skin by way of carpet, and having the skull of one of these animals by his side.

According to the rules of their order, this begging fraternity are very scantily clothed, their greatest claims to sanctity resting upon the voluntary abandonment of the luxuries and comforts of life. The contempt which they profess for all domestic accommodation, is, however, very inconsistent with their known propensity to accumulate worldly treasure. It is no secret in the neighbourhood, that the chief of the fakeers, who, covered with dirt and ashes, seems to have relinquished every vanity, is the proprietor of a considerable estate, and the

possessor of numerous flocks and herds. It is shrewdly suspected that these self-denying ascetics do not spend their whole time upon the rock of Jungheera, but that there are seasons in which they indemnify themselves for the penances which they undergo, in order to secure the veneration of an ignorant multitude. The disguise of chalk, long matted locks disfigured with dirt, and untrimmed beards, renders it easy for three or four confederates to personate one fakeer, relieving guard at stated intervals, and when off duty enjoying all the delights which money can purchase. The same person apparently may be seen always sitting in the same posture, neither eating, drinking, or smoking, and with nothing but the boughs of a tree to shelter him from the inclemencies of the season; and yet these privations, sustained only at stated times by one of several individuals, may be extremely light. But, though an immense number of hypocrites are to be found amongst these people, there are many Hindoo devotees, who really and truly encounter the most frightful hardships for the sake of a reward hereafter.

At a considerable distance below Jungheera, there are other rocks which attract the attention of the voyager; they are profusely sculptured and

fringed to their bases with wild creepers, and the overhanging garlands of the trees, which spring from every fissure. The projecting points of Colgong and Patergotta form a beautiful bay at this place; the amphitheatre of hills, gleaming like amethysts in the sun-set, and the small wooded islands, which rise in fairy beauty upon the glittering surface of Ganges, present a scene of loveliness, which it is scarcely possible to behold unmoved.

But there are objects of utility, as well as of beauty, to interest the traveller, whose destiny leads him to the neighbourhood of Monghyr. Above, on the opposite bank of the Ganges, a work has been constructed, which has excited the admiration of all who are capable of appreciating the importance of the benefit which it has conferred. The zillah or province of Sarun, during many ages, enjoyed the reputation of being one of the most fertile tracts in the British territories, having had the name, common to all fruitful places, of "the garden of India," bestowed upon it. A melancholy change, however, took place, in consequence of the encroachments of the river Gunduck, which undermined the dyke, and at length carried it away. This calamity threatened the destruction of a fair and populous district; for, too frequently, extensive

tracts of valuable land were inundated by the rising of the river, which on its reflux left nothing but barren wastes covered with sand, and hillocks alike unfitted for agricultural or pastoral occupation. The inhabitants, driven from their employments, forsook their villages, and for many miles the country presented nothing but waste and devastation. In the early part of 1830, the supreme government determined upon arresting the devastating encroachments of the river, and Captain Sage, the executive officer of the division, was directed to construct a dyke, or bund, for the security of the adjacent country. He commenced his operations in the middle of April in the same year, and on the nineteenth of the following June had completed his undertaking, along a distance of ninety-two miles two furlongs and fifty-seven yards. The bund is in its average dimensions forty-five feet wide at the base, ten in width at the top, and nine feet in height, forming an elevated road, on which carriages of any description may safely be driven. Another cross bund, supplied with sixteen sluices for the purpose of irrigation, was completed after the rains by the same indefatigable officer, who, under a burning sun, in the hottest season of the year, accomplished a work which would have done

credit to the genius of Holland. No fewer than 19,489 men were employed daily in this undertaking; and strict personal superintendence was necessary to secure their effectual co-operation. The merit of the design also belongs to Captain Sage; and in the opinion of competent judges, the solidity of the construction is such as to defy the utmost force of the river for many ages to come.

Agriculture, as well as manufactures, flourishes in the neighbourhood of Monghyr; grain of all kinds, sugar, and indigo are in great abundance, and the country is celebrated for its opium. Immense fields of poppies, which, though they have been not unjustly described as all glare and stench, have a gay appearance, their flowers varying in colours, like the tulip or the anemone, and changing with every breeze that sweeps across them, render part of the cultivated district one wide parterre. Cotton plantations abound; the paths are strewn with pods full to bursting, which disclose the soft treasure within, appearing like a lump of wool intermixed with a few black seeds: the blossom of the cotton plant is very pretty, somewhat resembling that of the gum cistus, but of a pale yellow. There are also large tracts of indigo, a dark green shrubby plant; the neighbourhood of a factory

being always indicated by the appearance of the lower order of natives employed in it. The name given to them, that of *leel wallahs* (blue fellows), is very characteristic and appropriate, for they are literally blue; the few clothes which they wear are dyed of that colour, and so are their skins, which seem to take the tint very easily. The contrast between the steel-coloured and the copper-coloured brethren has a very droll effect. There are gardens of the betel-nut and sugar-plantations in this part of the country, and though the coco-tree has almost disappeared, its place in the landscape is supplied by the date and tara palm. Cocos are not supposed to grow luxuriantly except in the vicinity of the coast; but their cultivation in many inland situations in India shews that a little care alone is necessary for their introduction into the most remote parts of Hindostan. Nothing can be more beautiful than the effect produced by their magnificent coronals, when intermixed with the foliage of other trees.

The coco-nut tree is revered and esteemed sacred in India, on account of its utility. It affords nutritious food and several kinds of beverage. When green, its fruit is excellent stewed; and when not eaten alone, slices enter into the compo-

sition of kaaries, and other made dishes : no one can have an idea of the flavour and delicacy of a coco-nut, who has only tasted it in the hard dry state in which it is brought to Europe. The milk from the freshly-gathered fruit is delicious. Vinegar is manufactured, and spirits distilled, from the juice of the palm-tree ; the oil it yields is unrivalled in excellence ; its leaves plaited are employed in making the walls and covering in the roofs of native cottages, and the fibres are twisted into cables, or, when finely picked, used for the stuffing of mattresses, cotton being esteemed too warm and soft for the climate. The coco-nut, either whole or in slices, always enters into the offerings made to the deities, whose shrines occur in the district where it grows. Graceful girls may be seen, carrying a small tray of polished brass, on which spices, fragrant flowers, and slices of the coco-nut are laid; intended for the altar of Mahadeva, or some equally-venerated object of their worship. The same honours do not appear to be paid to the bamboo, although it is, if possible, more important than the coco-nut, being used for scaffoldings, enclosures, houses, ladders, masts, oars, poles of every kind, and almost every sort of furniture.

There is no resident clergyman at Monghyr ;

but it is occasionally visited by the district chaplains, and a baptist missionary has an establishment, where public worship is constantly performed. At the visit of Bishop Heber, the congregation did not exceed sixty persons, of which three only were natives: a proof of the difficulty attending conversion in India, since nothing can be more fervent than the zeal which Christian missionaries bring to their endeavours.

The bank of the Ganges opposite to Monghyr has not the slightest pretensions to beauty; its low, flat, swampy shores, intersected with reedy islets, are the haunts of multitudes of alligators, which, in the hot season, may be seen sunning themselves by the side of the huge ant-hills erected upon the sand-banks, appearing above the surface of the water. Some of these animals attain to a prodigious size; they are exceedingly difficult to kill, in consequence of the adamantine armour in which the greater part of their bodies is cased. Even when the balls penetrate less guarded points, they are so tenacious of life as to cause a great deal of trouble before they can be finally despatched. One, which had received eight balls, and was supposed to be dead, after having been tied to the bamboo of a budgerow for a whole day, exhibited in the evening

so much strength and fierceness, as to be a dangerous neighbour. Many of these monsters are fifteen feet long, and they swim fearlessly past the boats, lifting up their terrific heads, and raising their dark bodies from the water as they glide along. Though not so frequently as in former times, when the echoes of the river were less disturbed by the report of fire-arms, natives are still the victims of that species of alligator, which lies in wait for men and animals, venturing incautiously too near their haunts. In many that have been killed, the silver ornaments worn by women and children, have been found, a convincing proof of the fearful nature of their prey.

An alligator, it is said, will sometimes make a plunge amidst a group of bathers at a ghaut, and, singling out one of the party, dart into the middle of the stream, defying pursuit by the rapidity of its movements against the current, through which it will fly with the velocity of an arrow, and having reached deep water it sinks with its victim into the abysses of the river. Eye-witnesses have given very frightful descriptions of the cruelty practised upon the unfortunate creatures fated to become the prey of these savage monsters. It is said that the alligator will play with its victim like a cat with a

mouse, tossing it into the air, and catching it again in its jaws, before the final dispatch ; and persons standing at a ghaut have witnessed this horrid spectacle, when one of their juvenile companions have been carried away without a chance of rescue. Probably, however, the alligator is obliged by its peculiar conformation to adopt this mode of swallowing its food : when it has captured one of the finny tribe, the fish is always seen to flash far above the water before it descends into the capacious jaws opened to receive it.

Sportsmen, the younger portion especially, delight in waging war against these giants of the stream, as they lie wallowing in the mud in shallow places, and presenting the defenceless parts of their bodies to the marksman. In the Sunderbunds, where the creeks and natural canals of the Ganges wind through the forest, whose margin almost mingles with the stream, alligators are sometimes engaged in deadly encounters with the tiger. A battle of this kind witnessed by a missionary is described to have been a drawn one, for although the tiger succeeded in dragging his unwieldy adversary into the jungle, after the lapse of an hour or two the alligator was seen to emerge, and to regain

the water, not very materially injured by the conflict it had sustained.

The natives of Monghyr are a quiet industrious race, rarely participating in the crimes which are so frequently perpetrated in the upper and lower country, neither addicted to the lawless proceedings, the onslaughts, murders, and highway-robberies often committed in open day by the warlike tribes of Hindostan, nor to the petty thefts, forgeries, burglaries, and sundry kinds of knavery, so common amidst the more artful and more timid Bengalees. Like all other natives, they are exceedingly litigious, and the attention of the public courts is taken up by suits of the most frivolous nature.

A civilian of rank, marching through the district, upon entering the breakfast tent, at the place of encampment for the day, was surprised by a very extraordinary apparition. An old woman, so withered and so wild in her attire as scarcely to seem to belong to humanity, was squatted in the corner. Rising up at his approach, she began to exclaim, or rather to scream out at the top of her voice, with all the fervour and volubility which mark her sex and country, a most unintelligible harangue, which the servants, who looked rather

conscious, attempted to stop by vociferating " *Choop! choop!*" (silence!) and by an endeavour to eject her from the tent. The judge, however, insisted upon hearing her story; and, becoming a little calm, she stated that her ancestors had ruined themselves by defending their right to a certain tree, which grew upon the boundaries of two estates; that judgment had been given and reversed many times, and that she, having carried on the suit in her own person, had obtained a decree, the fifteenth given, in her favour, and that now that she was absolutely reduced to poverty, with nothing but the possession of the tree to console her for the loss of the land, which had been sold to establish her right to it, the Saib's *khidmutgars*, requiring wood to boil water in a tea-kettle, had cut down this identical tree with their sacrilegious hands. The men, in vindication, stated that it was a stunted pollard, absolutely worthless, and fit only for firewood, a fact which they proved by incontestable evidence. Nevertheless, the old woman persisted in demanding justice, told her story over and over again, aggravating at each time the magnitude of the injury she had sustained, demanding many hundred rupees as a compensation; and finally, the judge, having ascertained that the woman's state-

ment was true, and that her family had been ruined in consequence of repeated legal contests for the property, sent her off with a gold mohur, the highest price which our friend had ever paid for a bundle of sticks.

CHAPTER IV.

THE BABA LOGUE.

It is possible to penetrate into the drawing-room of a mansion in England without being made aware that the house contains a troop of children, who, though not strictly confined to the nursery, seldom quit it except when in their best dresses and best behaviours, and who, when seen in any other part of the house, may be considered in the light of guests. It is otherwise in India. Traces of the *baba logue*, the Hindoostanee designation of a tribe of children, are to be discovered the instant a visitor enters the outer verandah ; a rocking-horse, a small cart, a wheeled chair, in which the baby may take equestrian or carriage exercise within doors, generally occupy conspicuous places, and probably—for Indian domestics are not very scrupulous respecting the proprieties in appearances—a line may be stretched across, adorned with a dozen or so of little muslin frocks, washed out hastily to supply the demand in some extraordinarily sultry day.

From the threshold to the deepest recesses of the interior, every foot of ground is strewn with toys of all sorts and dimensions, and from all parts of the world—English, Dutch, Chinese, and Hindostanee. In a family blessed with numerous olive branches, the whole house is converted into one large nursery; drawing-rooms, ante-rooms, bedrooms, and dressing-rooms, are all peopled by the young fry of the establishment. In the first, a child may be seen sleeping on the floor, under a musquito-net, stretched over an oval bamboo frame, and looking like a patent wire dish-cover; in the second, an infant of more tender years reposes on the arms of a bearer, who holds the baby in a manner peculiar to India, lying at length on a very thin mattress, formed of several folds of thick cotton cloth, and croaking a most lugubrious lullaby, as he paces up and down; in a third, two or more of the juveniles are assembled, one with its only garment converted into leading-strings, another sitting under a punkah, and a third running after a large ball, with a domestic trotting behind, and following the movements of the child in an exceedingly ludicrous manner.

Two attendants, at the least, are attached to each of the children; one of these must always be

upon duty, and the services of the other are only dispensed with while at meals; an *ayah* and a *bearer* are generally employed, the latter being esteemed the best and most attentive nurse of the two. These people never lose sight of their respective charges for a single instant, and seldom permit them to wander beyond arms' length; consequently, in addition to the company of the children, that of their domestics must be endured, who seem to think themselves privileged persons; and should the little master or miss under their care penetrate into the bed-chamber of a visitor—no difficult achievement, where all the doors are open—they will follow close and make good their entrance also. It is their duty to see that the child does not get into any mischief, and as they are certain of being severely reprehended if the little urchin should happen to tumble down and hurt itself, for their own sakes they are careful to prevent such a catastrophe at any personal inconvenience whatever to their master's guests. When the children are not asleep, they must be amused, an office which devolves upon the servants, who fortunately take great delight in all that pleases the infant mind, and never weary of their employment. They are a little too apt to resort to a very favourite me-

thod of beguiling time, that of playing on the *tom-tom*, an instrument which is introduced into every mansion tenanted by the *baba logue* for the ostensible purpose of charming the young folks, but in reality to gratify their own peculiar taste. An almost constant drumming is kept up from morning until night, a horrid discord, which, on a very hot day, aggravates every other torment. The rumbling and squeaking of a low cart, in which a child is dragged for hours up and down a neighbouring verandah, the monotonous ditty of the old bearer, of which one can distinguish nothing but *haba*, added to the incessant clamour of the *tom-tom*, to say nothing of occasional squalls, altogether furnish forth a concert of the most hideous description.

Nevertheless, the gambols of children, the ringing glee of their infant voices, and the infinite variety of amusement which they afford, do much towards dispelling the *ennui* and *tedium* of an Indian day. The climate depresses their spirits to a certain point; they are diverting without being troublesome, for there is always an attendant at hand to whom they may be consigned should they become unruly; and certainly, considering how much they are petted and spoiled, it is only doing

Anglo-Indian children justice to say, that they are, generally speaking, a most orderly race. There can scarcely be a prettier sight than that of a groupe of fair children, gathered round or seated in the centre of their dark-browed attendants, listening with eager countenances to one of those marvellous legends, of which Indian story-tellers possess so numerous a catalogue ; or convulsed with laughter as they gaze upon the antics of some merry fellow, who forgets the gravity and dignity considered so becoming to a native, whether Moslem or Hindoo, in his desire to afford entertainment to the *baba logue*. In one particularly well-regulated family, in which the writer happened to be a temporary inmate, a little boy anxiously expressed a wish that we would go very early to a ball which was to take place in the evening, because, he said, he and his brothers were to have a *dhole*, and the bearers had promised to dance for them. A *dhole* is an instrument of forty-drum-power ; fortunately, both children and servants had the grace to reserve it for their own private recreation, and doubtless, for that night at least, the jackalls were scared from the door.

The dinner for the children is usually served up at the same time with the tiffin placed before the

seniors of the family. The young folks sit apart, accommodated with low tables, and arm-chairs of correspondent size ; and as they are usually great favourites with all the servants, it is no uncommon thing to see the whole *posse* of *khidmutgars* desert their master's chairs to crowd round those of the *babas*. One of the principal dishes at the juvenile board is denominated *pish pash*, weak broth thickened with rice, and a fowl pulled to pieces ; another, called *dhāl baat*, consists of rice and yellow peas stewed together ; *croquettes*, a very delicate preparation of chicken, beaten in a mortar, mixed up with fine batter, and fried in egg-shaped balls, is also very common ; and there is always a *kaaree*. Europeans entertain only one notion respecting a curry, as they term the favourite Indian dish, and which they suppose to be invariably composed of the same ingredients, a rich stew, highly seasoned, and served with rice. There are, however, infinite varieties of the *kaaree* tribe ; that which is eaten by the natives differing essentially from that produced at European tables ; while there is a distinct preparation for children, and another for dogs : rice and turmeric are the constant accompaniments of all, but with respect to the other articles employed, there is a very wide latitude, of which the native

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cooks avail themselves, by concocting a kind peculiar to their own manufacture, which is not to be found at any table save that of the person whom they serve.

Captain Basil Hall assures us that the *kaaree* is not of Asiatic origin, and that the natives of India owe its introduction to the Portuguese ; a startling assertion to those who are acquainted with the vehement objection to any innovation in dress or food entertained by Hindoos of all castes, and by the Moosulmans of this part of the world also, who are even less liberal than those of other countries. Nevertheless, it is an indisputable fact that, notwithstanding the prejudice which exists all over India against the adoption of foreign novelties, an exception has been made in favour of a few importations, which are now in universal request, and which even the best-informed natives can scarcely be made to believe were not indigenous to the soil, and entered as deeply into the household economy of their most remote ancestors as in their own at the present day. Tobacco, for instance, has found its way to every part of the Peninsula, and must have extended rapidly to the most remote places, immediately upon its introduction from Turkey or Persia, or by the early Portuguese colonists. The

chili, another American plant, is in almost equal esteem, and is to be purchased in all the native bazaars; while every class,—whether the staple food, as amongst the wealthy Moosulmans, be flesh, or cakes of flour, which latter compose the meal of the poorer orders dwelling in the upper provinces, or the boiled rice of the low grounds,—is invariably accompanied by *kaaree*, composed of vegetables mixed up with a variety of spices, and enriched, according to the means of the party, with *ghee*. *Chetney*, in all probability, was formerly used as the sauce to flavour the rice or flour-cakes, which, without some adjunct of the kind, must be extremely insipid; but the substitute offers a very superior relish, and as in its least elaborate state it is within the reach of the very poorest native, its invention and dissemination are actual benefits conferred upon the country. The *kaaree* for children is, of course, extremely simple, nor indeed are highly-seasoned dishes very frequently seen at European tables in the Bengal Presidency. They have nothing like the pepper-pot of the West-Indies, and it is rarely that the gastronome, delighting in the quintessence of spice, can be gratified by the productions of Indian cookery.

The *khana*, dinner of the *baba logue*, is washed down with pure water, and, in about an hour or two after its conclusion, preparations for the evening exercise commence. The children are to be bathed for the second, and re-attired perhaps for the tenth time in the day. In the hot weather, it is not until this hour that the slightest pains are considered necessary about the personal appearance of the young folks, who, until they are four or five years old, are permitted to go about the house during the earlier part of the day sometimes more than half-naked. In the evening, however, the toilette is a more serious affair; babies are decked out in their laced caps, and a pair of *pajamas* (trowsers) are added to the frocks of their elder brothers and sisters, while those still more advanced in years are enrobed in their best suits, and flourish in ribbon-sashes and embroidered hems; but, excepting in the cold weather, there are no hats, bonnets, tippets, or gloves to be seen.

It is not often that parents accompany their children in the evening drive or walk; the latter are taken out by their attendants at least an hour before grown-up people choose to exhibit themselves in the open air. The equipages of the *baba logue* are usually kept expressly for their accom-

modation, and of a build and make so peculiar as to render them no very enviable conveyances for their seniors : palanquin-carriages of all sorts and descriptions, drawn by one horse or a pair of bullocks, in which the children and the servants squat together on the floor ; common palanquins, containing an infant of two or three years old, with its bearer ; *taun jawns*, in which a female nurse is seated with a baby on her lap ; together with miniature sociables, chaises, and shandrydans,—in short, every sort of vehicle adapted to the Lilliputian order, are put into requisition. Many of the little folk are mounted upon ponies ; some of these equestrians are so young as to be unable to sit upon their steeds without the assistance of a *chuprassy* on each side, and a groom to lead the animal ; others, older and more expert, scamper along, keeping their attendants, who are on foot, at full speed, as they tear across the roads, with heads uncovered and hair flying in the wind.

One of the prettiest spectacles afforded by the evening drive in Calcutta, is the exhibition of its juvenile inhabitants, congregated on a particular part of the plain between the Government-house and the fort, by the side of the river. This is the chosen spot ; all the equipages, a strange grotesque

medley, are drawn up at the corner, and the young people are seen, in crowds, walking with their servants, laughing, chattering, and full of glee, during the brief interval of enfranchisement. For the most part, they are pale, delicate little creatures; cherry-cheeks are wholly unknown, and it is only a few who can boast the slightest tinge of the rose. Nevertheless, there is no dearth of beauty; independent of feature, the exceeding fairness of their skins, contrasted with the Asiatic swarthiness around them, and the fairy lightness of their forms, are alone sufficient to render them exceedingly attractive. Not many number more than eight years, and perhaps in no other place can there be seen so large an assembly of children, of the same age and rank, disporting in a promenade. Before night closes in upon the gay crowd, still driving on the neighbouring roads, the juvenile population take their departure, and being disposed in their respective carriages, return home. At day-break, they make their appearance again, in equal numbers; but their gambols are *per-force* confined to the broad and beaten path; they dare not, as in Europe, disperse themselves over the green sward, nor enjoy the gratification of rolling and tumbling on the grass, filling their laps with wild flowers, and

pelting each other with showers of daisies. Their attendants keep a sharp look-out for snakes, and though these reptiles are sometimes seen gliding about in the neighbourhood, there is no record of an accident to the *baba logue* from their poisonous fangs.

Itinerant venders of toys take their station in the favourite haunt of their most liberal patrons, exhibiting a great variety of tempting articles, all bright and gaudy with gold and silver. These glittering wares are formed out of very simple materials, but a good deal of ingenuity is displayed in the construction: elephants more than a foot high, richly caparisoned, hollow, and made of paper, coloured to the life, with trunks which move about to the admiration of all the beholders, may be purchased for a few pice; nearly equally good imitations of budgerows and palanquins, also of paper, bear a still smaller price; there are, besides, cages containing brilliant birds of painted clay, suspended from the top bars by an almost invisible hair, and so constantly in motion as to be speedily demolished by cats, should they happen to hang within reach of their claws; magnificent cockatoos made of the pith of a plant which is turned to many purposes in India, and which in China is

manufactured into paper ; to these, whirligigs and reptiles of wax, set in motion by the slightest touch, are added. The Calcutta toymen, though not equally celebrated, far surpass those of Benares in the accuracy of their representations of animate and inanimate objects ; they work with more fragile materials, and their chief dependence being upon customers fond of novelties, they are constantly bringing new articles into the market. In the upper provinces, where the demand is less, European children are obliged to be content with the common toys of the bazaars ; nondescripts carved in wood, fac-similes of those which pleased former generations, but which are discarded the instant that better commodities are offered for sale.

The popular evening-entertainment for children in Calcutta, juvenile balls not yet being established, is an exhibition of *fantoccini*, which goes by the name of a *kat pootlee nautch*. The showmen are of various grades, and exhibit their puppets at different prices, from a rupee upwards, according to the richness of their scenery and decorations. A large room in the interior is selected for the place of representation ; a sheet stretched across between two pillars, and reaching within three feet of the ground, conceals the living performers from

view ; there is a back scene behind this proscenium, generally representing the exterior of a palace of silver, and the entertainment commences with the preparations for a grand *darbar*, or levee, in which European ladies and gentlemen are introduced. The puppets are of a very grotesque and barbarous description, inferior to the generality of Indian handy-works, but they are exceedingly well-managed, and perform all their evolutions with great precision. Sofas and chairs are brought in for the company, who are seen coming to court, some on horseback, some on elephants, and some in carriages ; their descent from these conveyances is very dexterously achieved ; and the whole harlequinade of fighting, dancing, tiger-hunting, and alligator-slaying goes off with great *éclat*. The audience, however, forms the most attractive part of the spectacle. The youngest babies occupy the front rows, seated on the ground or in the laps of their nurses, who look very picturesque in the Eastern attitude, half-shadowed by their long flowing veils ; beyond these scattered groupings, small arm-chairs are placed, filled with little gentry capable of taking care of themselves ; and behind them, upon sofas, the mamas and a few female friends are seated, the rest of the room being

crowded with servants, male and female, equally delighted with the *baba logue* at the exploits of the wooden performers.

Generally, several of the native children belonging to the establishment are present, clad in white muslin chemises, with silver bangles round their wrists and ancles, their fine dark eyes sparkling with pleasure as they clap their little hands and echo the *wah! wah!* of their superiors. Many of these children are perfectly beautiful, and their admission into the circle adds considerably to the effect of the whole scene. The performances are accompanied by one or two instruments, and between the acts, one of the showmen exhibits a few of the common feats of sleight of hand accomplished with so much ease by the inferior orders of Indian jugglers.

There is another species of dramatic representation, in which the *baba logue* take especial delight. A man, a goat, and a monkey, comprise the *dramatis personæ*; the latter, dressed as a sepoy, goes through a variety of evolutions, aided by his horned and bearded coadjutor. The children—though from the constant repetition of this favourite entertainment they have the whole affair by heart, and could at any time enact the part of either of the

performers,—are never weary of listening to the monologue of the showman, and of gazing on the antics of his dumb associates. This itinerant company may be seen wandering about the streets of Calcutta all the morning; a small *douceur* to the *durwan* at the gate admits them into the compound, and the little folks in the verandah no sooner catch a glimpse of the mounted monkey, than they are wild for the rehearsal of the piece.

Time in India is not much occupied by the studies of the rising generation; an infant prodigy is a *rara avis* amongst the European community; for, sooth to say, the education of children is shockingly neglected; few can speak a word of English, and though they may be highly accomplished in Hindostanee, their attainments in that language are not of the most useful nature, nor, being entirely acquired from the instructions of the servants, particularly correct or elegant. Some of the *babas* learn to sing little Hindostanee airs very prettily, and will even *improvise* after the fashion of the native poets; but this is only done when they are unconscious of attracting observation, for the love of display, so injudiciously inculcated in England, has not yet destroyed the simplicity of Anglo-Indian children. The art in which, unhappily, quick and

clever urchins attain the highest degree of proficiency, is that of scolding. The Hindostanee vocabulary is peculiarly rich in terms of abuse ; native Indian women, it is said, excel the females of every other country in volubility of utterance, and in the strength and number of the opprobrious epithets which they shower down upon those who raise their ire. They can declaim for five minutes at a time without once drawing breath ; and the shrillness of their voices adds considerably to the effect of their eloquence.

This description of talent is frequently turned to account in a manner peculiar to India. Where a person conceives himself to be aggrieved by his superior in a way which the law cannot reach, he not unfrequently revenges himself upon his adversary, by hiring two old women out of the bazaar, adepts in scurrility, to sit on either side of his door. These hags possess a perfect treasury of foul words, which they lavish upon the luckless master of the house with the heartiest good-will, and without stint or limitation. Nor are their invectives confined to him alone ; to render them the more poignant, all his family, and particularly his mother, are included ; nothing of shame or infamy is spared in the accusations heaped upon her head ;

a stainless character avails her not, since she is assailed merely to give a double sting to the malicious attacks upon her son. So long as these tirades are wasted upon the ears of the neighbours, they are comparately innocuous; but should they find their way to the tympanums against which they are directed, the unfortunate man is involved in the deepest and most irremediab^{le} disgrace; if he be once known to have heard it he is undone: consequently, for the preservation of his dignity, the object of this strange persecution keeps himself closely concealed in the most distant chamber of his house, and a troop of horse at his gate could not more effectually detain him prisoner than the virulent tongues of two abominable old women. The *chokeydars*, who act in the capacity of the *gendarm^{erie}* of Europe, take no cognizance of the offence; the mortified captive is without a remedy, and must come to terms with the person whom he has offended, to rid himself of the pestilent effusions of his tormentors.

With such examples before their eyes,—for there is not a woman, old or young, in the compound, who could not exert her powers of elocution with equal success,—a great deal of care is necessary to prevent the junior members of a family from indulging

in the natural propensity to scold and call names. Spoiled and neglected children abuse their servants in an awful manner, using language of the most horrid description, while those parents who are imperfectly acquainted with Hindostanee are utterly ignorant of the meaning of the words which come so glibly from the tongues of their darlings.

In British India, children and parents are placed in a very singular position with regard to each other; the former do not speak their mother-tongue; they are certain of acquiring Hindostanee, but are very seldom taught a word of English until they are five or six years old, and not always at that age. In numerous instances, they cannot make themselves intelligible to their parents, it being no uncommon case to find the latter almost totally ignorant of the native dialect, while their children cannot converse in any other. Some ladies improve themselves by the prattle of their infants, having perhaps known nothing of Hindostanee until they have got a young family about them, an inversion of the usual order of things; the children, though they may understand English, are shy of speaking it, and do not, while they remain in India, acquire the same fluency which distinguishes their utterance of the native language. The only exceptions

occur in King's regiments, where of course English is constantly spoken, and the young families of the officers have ample opportunity of making themselves acquainted with their vernacular tongue in their intimate association with the soldiers of the corps. Under such tuition, purity of pronunciation, it may be supposed, would be wanting; but children educated entirely at the schools instituted in King's regiments, do not contract that peculiar and disagreeable accent which invariably characterizes the dialect of the country-born, and which the offspring of Europeans, if brought up in the academical establishments of Calcutta, inevitably acquire. The sons of officers who cannot afford to send their children to England for their education, often obtain commissions in their fathers' regiments, having grown up into manhood without quitting the land of their birth, and without having enjoyed those advantages which are supposed to be necessary to qualify them for their station in society; yet these gentlemen are not in the slightest degree inferior to their brother officers in their attainments in classic and English literature; in the latter, perhaps, they are even more deeply versed, since they can only obtain an acquaintance with many interesting circumstances relative to their father-

land through the medium of books; while they excel in Hindostanee, and are certain of being appointed to the interpreterships of the corps to which they belong. Clergymen's sons, also, do infinite credit to the instructions which they receive in India; and though it may be advisable for them to follow the general example, and finish their studies in Europe, it is not actually necessary; but without the advantages enjoyed by the parties above-mentioned, it is scarcely possible to obtain even a decent education in India.

The climate is usually supposed to be exceedingly detrimental to European children after they have attained their sixth or seventh year; but vast numbers grow up into men and women without having sought a more genial atmosphere, and when thus acclimated, the natives themselves do not sustain the heat with less inconvenience. When the pecuniary resources of the parents leave them little hope of returning to Europe with their families, the accomplishments secured to the daughters by an English or French education, are dearly purchased by the alienation which must take place between them and their nearest relatives. If interest be wanting to obtain commissions in the King's or Company's service for the sons, boys must be sent

to seek their fortune at home, since there are very few channels for European speculation open in India. Indigo-factories form the grand resource for unemployed young men; but, generally speaking, family connexions in the mother-country offer better prospects. With the female branches of Anglo-Indian families it is different; the grand aim and object which their parents have in view is to get them married to men possessing civil or military appointments in India, and they consider the chances of so desirable a destiny materially increased by the attainment of a few showy and superficial accomplishments in some European seminary. In too many instances, the money thus bestowed must be entirely thrown away; young ladies, emancipated from the school-room at an early age, and perchance not acquainted with any society beyond its narrow limits, have only the name of an English education, and know little or nothing more than might have been acquired in India; others, who have enjoyed greater advantages, are in danger of contracting habits and prejudices in favour of their own country which may embitter a residence in India; and as it frequently happens that men of rank choose their wives from the dark daughters of the land, or are guided wholly by the eye, the

good to be derived scarcely counterbalances the great evil of long estrangement from the paternal roof.

The delight of Anglo-Indian parents in their children is of very brief duration, and miserably alloyed by the prospect of separation; the joy of the mother, especially, is subjected to many drawbacks; the health of the baby forms a source of unceasing anxiety from the moment of its birth. Infant life in the torrid zone hangs upon so fragile a thread, that the slightest ailment awakens alarm; the distrust of native attendants, sometimes but too well-founded, adds to maternal terrors, and where the society is small, the social meetings of a station are suspended, should illness, however slight, prevail amongst the *baba logue*. Where mothers are unable to nurse their own children, a native woman, or *dhye*, as she is called, is usually selected for the office, Europeans being difficult to be procured; these are expensive and troublesome appendages to a family; they demand high wages on account of the sacrifice which they affect to make of their usual habits, and the necessity of purchasing their reinstatement to caste, forfeited by the pollution they have contracted, a prejudice which the Mussulmans have acquired from their Hindoo asso-

ciates. Their diet must be strictly attended to, and they are too well aware of their importance not to make their employers feel it: in fact, there is no method in which natives can so readily impose upon the European community as that in which their children are concerned. The dearest article of native produce is asses'-milk, in consequence of its being recommended by medical men for the nutriment of delicate children; the charge is never less than a rupee per pint, and it frequently rises much higher. It is useless to add a donkey to the farm-yard belonging to the establishment, in the hope of obtaining a regular and cheaper supply; the expense of the animal's keep is enormous, and it is certain to become dry or to die in a very short time. Few servants refuse to connive at this knavery, and the same donkey may be purchased two or three times over by its original proprietor, and not an individual in the compound, though the fact may be notorious to all, will come forward to detect the cheat. It is a point of honour amongst them to conceal such delinquencies, and they know that if asses'-milk be required for the *baba*, it will be purchased at any price.

Notwithstanding the extreme terror with which attached parents regard the hour which is to se-

parate them from their children, their greatest anxiety is to secure for them the advantages of an European education, and in almost every instance those who remain in India are only kept there in consequence of pecuniary embarrassments. The misery of parting with beloved objects seems even less severe than that of retaining them under so many circumstances supposed to be adverse to their advancement in life; and the danger of entrusting them to unamiable or incompetent persons in England, appears to be nothing compared to the wretchedness of seeing them grow up under their own eyes, without the means of acquiring those branches of polite learning deemed indispensable by ambitious mothers: numbers, who are too completely the offspring of the soil to require change of climate, are sent to England, in order that in accomplishments at least they may vie with their fairer associates.

It must be confessed that many difficulties are placed in the way of female instruction in India, and indeed it is only where a mother is qualified to take an active part in the tuition of her daughters that they can acquire more than the mere rudiments of education. The climate is unfavourable to occupation of this kind; English ladies soon

learn to fancy that it is impossible to exert themselves as they would have done at home; they speedily become weary of the task, and they have so many obstacles to contend against, in the Upper Proviuces especially, where the necessary books cannot always be obtained, that only spirits of the most active nature can persevere. Calcutta offers more facilities; it possesses schools, although of a very inferior description, and private education may be carried on with the aid of masters, whose qualifications are quite equal to those which are to be found in some of the best provincial towns in England; but the climate of Bengal is unfortunately more trying to youthful constitutions than that of the higher districts; and at the first indication of declining health, parents take the alarm, and strain every nerve to procure the means of sending their children home. Not unfrequently the mother accompanies her young family, leaving the father thus doubly bereaved; the husband and wife are sometimes parted from each other for many years, where the latter is unwilling to relinquish the superintendence of her sons and daughters to other hands; but, in many cases, the lady spends the time in voyaging between England and India. Where there are funds to support the expense, the

wives of civil or military residents seem to think nothing of making the passage half a dozen times before they settle finally in one quarter of the globe; establishments which appear to be permanent are often broken up in an instant; some panic occurs; the mother flies with her children to another land, or, should it be convenient for the father to apply for his furlough, the whole family take their departure, leaving a blank in the society to which perchance they have contributed many pleasures.

Ladies who take their children home at a very early age, when the dangerous period has passed, sometimes venture the experiment of bringing out a governess to complete their education in India. The expedient is seldom successful; though bound in the heaviest penalties not to marry during a stipulated number of years, they cannot be kept to their engagements; the hand of the governess is often promised before the end of the voyage, and there is no chance of retaining her in the Upper Provinces; seclusion from society is found to be ineffectual, as it only serves to arouse the knight-errantry of the idle youth of the station; rich suitors pay at once the sum that is to be forfeited by previous agreement, and poor ones declare that

marriage cancels all such bonds, and defy the injured party to recover. Neither fortune nor connexion is much regarded in India in the choice of a wife; a few shewy accomplishments,—that of singing especially,—will always be preferred, and even where all these are wanting, gentlemen of high birth and suitable appointments will stoop very low: the European waiting-maid has as fair a chance as her young mistress of making the best match which the society can afford, and mortifying instances are of no unusual occurrence, in which a *femme de chambre* has carried off a prize from the belles of the most distinguished circle of the presidency.

With these melancholy facts before their eyes, it seems surprising that the heads of houses should ever burthen themselves with the care and responsibility which the addition of a governess to their families must always entail; the only chance they have of retaining the services of a person in this capacity occurs when the choice has fallen on some well-conducted woman, who is separated from her husband, and desirous of obtaining an asylum in a foreign land.

The eagerness with which females of European birth are usually sought in marriage in India is the

cause of the depressed state of the schools in Calcutta. No sooner is a lady to whom mothers would gladly entrust their children established as a schoolmistress, than she is induced to exchange the troubles and anxieties attendant upon her situation for a more desirable home. If men of rank should not offer, rich tradesmen are always to be found in the list of suitors; and where pride does not interfere, the superior wealth of many individuals of this class renders them equally eligible for the husbands of unportioned women. The bride deserts her charge for more sacred duties, and the school falls into incompetent hands. Owing to these adverse circumstances, few female pupils who have European mothers living, are to be found in any of the establishments for their education in Calcutta: but where there is an adequate provision for the maintenance of the child, private seminaries have hitherto been preferred to the Orphan School at Kidderpore; an institution which, under the zealous superintendence of the Rev. Mr. Hovenden, made rapid strides in improvement. The death of this gentleman, whose whole heart was engaged in the plans which he formed for the advantage of the youthful community placed under his direction, must long be severely felt; but from his

judicious arrangements, the establishment cannot fail to derive lasting benefit; and in the present spread of intellect, we may hope that in the course of a few years a still better system may be introduced at Kidderpore, and that other schools may spring up, in which every advantage of education may be obtained without the necessity of a voyage to Europe.

CHAPTER V.

O U D E.

THE fate of the kingdom of Oude seems now verging to a crisis, and, in all probability, a short period will decide whether it is to continue under the mismanagement of its present rulers, or be placed entirely under the control of the British Government. At the present period, Lucknow affords an almost perfect realization of the *beau ideal* of the court of an Asiatic despot, though the power over life and limb has been somewhat abridged by the presence of the British Resident.

In natural advantages, the kingdom of Oude does not yield to any part of India. The whole surface of the province is level, and watered by numerous streams; and the land, when properly cultivated, is exceedingly productive, affording rich crops of every sort of grain, cotton, sugar, indigo, opium, and all the most valuable products of Hindostan. The gifts of Heaven have, however, been neutralized by the ruinous policy of an oppressive

government. “The impression, which generally remained uppermost,” observes the writer of a private letter,* dated in December last, “as the general result of our visit to Lucknow, was that of disgust. In a state in which the people have no voice, in respect of the amount or kind of taxation, or as to the disposal of the revenue raised, every sort of improvement must depend upon the ruling power. Every where we saw proofs of the frivolity of the amusements of the sovereign, and of the lavish expense at which they are gratified; no where could we perceive any public work in progress for the benefit of the community. Along one entire side of this extensive and populous capital runs the river Goomtee, over which there is not a single bridge; that which was commenced being left unfinished. What *might* not be done in this kingdom! It has no national debt, and if there be truth in reports generally believed, it has stores of wealth, though secretly hoarded. But even if these rumours be groundless, it is known that the present annual revenue, without reviving an old, or imposing a new tax, is fully adequate to meet all proper demands for the state and splendour of the

* Addressed to the Editor of *The Calcutta Literary Gazette*, and forwarded by him to the writer of this work.

sovereign, the maintenance of efficient judicial and fiscal establishments, and for carrying forward works of improvement and of utility. It is sad to say, that whatever the public servants do not peculate, and put by in secret, against times of need and difficulty, to themselves, is squandered by the dominant authority in vain and frivolous amusements, in the pursuits of a weak mind, and a vitiated taste, and the indulgence of depraved habits. Although his servants bow down their necks to the royal person, he has little or no voice in the management of the affairs of the country, and the sin of misrule must rest upon the head of his chosen minister.

“ In the short space between Cawnpore and Lucknow, as well as from appearances immediately around the capital, I was disposed to think the tales of mal-administration exaggerated. The reverse, however, became but too obvious each stage we proceeded, by the way of Seetapore, to Shahjehanpore. We passed over miles and miles of waste in succession, not of barren land, incapable of cultivation, —for the fertility of the soil was manifest in many places, and traces of former tillage plainly discernible ; such as ridges dividing fields ; wells for irrigation, now dilapidated and useless, and groves of mango-trees, far remote from present habitations ;

—but evincing that these parts of the country had once been populous. Where the soil is naturally so rich, where so much facility for irrigation exists, as well in the nearness of water to the surface, as in the numerous small streams running from the mountains to unite themselves with the Ganges, it seems impossible to trace the mournful waste and depopulation to any other source than that of impolitic and unjust administration. This cause alone was assigned by all those with whom I conversed on the subject,—and they were of all classes, such as officials now in employ, or who had been employed under former ministers, cultivators, shop-keepers, pensioned sepoy, chokeydars, &c.,—they all declared that oppressive taxation occasioned this melancholy state of things; that it was the same whether an *aumil* (agent) or a renter farmed; that no faith was kept; that the rent assessed was merely nominal, there being no limit to the demand, except the degree of means and power to enforce it. This it was which drove the stronger *malgoozars* (landholders) into resistance, and forced the weaker to fly the country. It is a matter for surprise that any cultivators remain: but the tenacity with which this class cling to their homes is notorious, and it is probable, indeed, that the very lowest grade of the

people,—the ryots,—suffer least, because oppression falls principally on the chiefs of villages; while it is certain that the custom of paying rent in kind by *buttai*, which prevails uniformly in Oude, is beneficial to the mere ryot. In our provinces, money-rents, fixed without advertence to fluctuation of prices, and adhered to for several successive years, have much injured our cultivators.

“At no time, and on no occasion, did I ever feel more proud of being in the service of the British Indian Government, than on recrossing within its frontier. After having travelled through a wilderness, we passed the small stream called Sooketa, which divides Oude from our territory, and is not more than ten yards wide. Up to this point we scarcely saw a tilled field;—from it, all the way to Shahjehanpore, about four coss, we gazed upon one vast sheet of rich cultivation, wheat, barley, *urhur* (a species of rye), grain of all kinds, cotton, sugar-cane, &c.;—the road bounded by banks or ditches; in short, every indication of industry, prosperity, and security. There is no perceptible change in the nature of the soil, nor is any thing changed, in fact, except the ruling power.”

The unfinished bridge intended to span the

Goomtee, mentioned in the foregoing remarks, was a project of Saadut Ali, the late sovereign; it was to have been of iron, and the materials had arrived from England; but the death of the monarch taking place before they could be employed for the intended purpose, his successor, imbibing the prejudice common in Hindoostan, that no luck can attend the completion of an undertaking thus arrested in its progress, suffered the design to fall to the ground. There is, however, or at least there was, a bridge of solid masonry across the Goomtee, at Lucknow, besides one of platformed boats, that in the centre being moveable and opened for an hour every day.

The king of Oude has kept up a greater degree of state than his more highly descended, but less fortunate, contemporary of Delhi; and, in fact, Lucknow is the only native court in Hindostan, which can afford any idea of the princely magnificence affected by the former rulers of India; that of Gwalior can bear no comparison, nor are those in the central provinces distinguished by the pomp and splendour which still characterize the throne of this ill-governed kingdom.

Like the generality of Indian cities, Lucknow presents a more imposing spectacle at a distance

than its interior can realize, though some of its buildings may bear a comparison with those of the most celebrated capitals in the world. When viewed from some commanding point, the city exhibits a splendid assemblage of minarets, cupolas, pinnacles, towers, turrets, and lofty arched gateways, through which, with many windings, the river glides, while the whole of this bright confusion of palace and temple, is shadowed and interspersed with the rich foliage of trees of gigantic growth and -redundant luxuriance. But when visited in detail, the gorgeousness of the picture is obscured by the more than ordinary degree of dirt, filth, and squalid poverty, which are placed in juxtaposition with its grandest feature: the lanes leading from the principal avenues are ankle-deep in mud; and many of the hovels, which afford an insufficient shelter to a swarming population, are the most wretched habitations that imagination can conceive.

The capital of Oude is divided into three quarters. The first is chiefly appropriated to the mercantile community attached to the court and the residency; this district is composed of narrow, dirty, and inconvenient streets, and with the exception of a chowk, or market-place, and one or two open

spaces occupied by the higher order of shopkeepers, the whole is mean beyond any comparison with the correspondent portions of other native cities. The population is immense, and the beggars quite as abundant as in places where mendicity is sanctioned by a higher degree of holiness than Lucknow can boast. Every corner of the streets is occupied by faqueers, whose stentorian voices are heard above the Babel-like dissonance of an Asiatic city. The second quarter which sprang up principally under the auspices of Saadut Ali, in addition to one exceedingly handsome street above a mile long, consists of a spacious chowk, and several well-appointed bazaars. It is entered at each end by a lofty gateway, and is composed of many palaces, and palace-like mansions, belonging to the king, and occupied by the members of his family, and the officers of his household. The architecture, though striking and picturesque, is rather whimsical, being an admixture of all sorts of orders and styles, Grecian and Moorish, diversified by modern innovations and alterations. The furniture of these houses is in the European style, and many contain a very curious and heterogeneous assemblage of upholsterer's goods, such as are seldom now to be seen in the countries which produced

them. The third and most interesting quarter is of a more purely Oriental character, and contains numerous splendid buildings, mosques, and royal residences, chiefly completed during the sovereignty of Asoph-ud-Dowlah, who, upon his accession to the throne, quitted Fyzabad, the former capital of Oude, and fixed the seat of his government at Lucknow. The palace, which faces the Goomtee, comprises six principal courts or quadrangles, surrounded by pavilion-like buildings. In the first of these, which is entered by two lofty gateways, the attendants of the court have their apartments. Over the outer-gate there is a handsome chamber, called the Nobut Khana, or music-room, forming an orchestra upon a very splendid scale. The second court, encompassed by state apartments, is laid out as a garden, having a well, or bowlee, in the centre. Round this well are pavilions, opening to the water, and intended to afford a cool retreat during the hot weather; the air is refreshed by the constant dripping of the fountain, and the piazzas and arcaded chambers beyond, within the influence of its luxurious atmosphere, are well calculated for sleeping chambers in the sultry nights so constantly occurring throughout the period of the hot winds. Parallel

to the second court, and at the eastward of it, stands a splendid edifice, raised upon an arched terrace, entirely of stone. This fabric, which is called the Sungee Dalaun, contains a grand hall, surrounded with a double arcade, crowned with a cupola at each angle, and one over the principal front, all of copper doubly gilt. At the extremities of the terrace there are wings, and flower-gardens stretch along each front, divided into parterres by walks and fountains. A corridor extends round this court, planted with vines, and out of three entrances, one with a covered passage is appropriated to the ladies. These gateways are decked with gilded domes, and the mosque, zenana, and other buildings attached to the palace, give to the whole edifice the air of a city raised by some enchanter. Without entering farther into dry descriptive details, it may be sufficient to say, that in no place in India can there be a more vivid realization of visions conjured up by a perusal of the splendid fictions of the *Arabian Nights*. Those who have visited the Kremlin, have pronounced that far-famed edifice to be inferior to the Imambara; and the palaces of the Hyder Baugh, Hossein Baugh, and Seesa Mahal, have nearly equal claims to admiration.

The banks of the Goomtee are beautifully planted, and its parks and gardens rendered singularly attractive by the multitude of animals kept in them. At a suburban palace, European visitants are delighted with the novel sight of a herd of English cattle, their superior size, roundness of form, and sleek looks, offering a strong contrast to the smaller, humped, and dewlapped breeds of Hindostan: the latter are perhaps more picturesque, but the associations connected with cows bred in English meads, the numerous pastoral recollections which their unexpected appearance revive in the mind, render them, when viewed beneath the shade of the tamarinds and banians of a tropical clime, objects of deep and peculiar interest.

The menageries of Lucknow are very extensive, and besides those wild and savage animals kept for the purpose of assisting at "the pomps of death and theatres of blood," in which this barbaric court delights, there are many fierce beasts, not intended for fighting, retained merely as ornamental appendages. Several rhinoceroses are amongst the number; they are chained to trees in the park, but some of the tigers appear to be so ill-secured, rattling the wooden bars of their cages with such vigorous perseverance, that it requires rather strong

nerves to approach the places of their confinement. Delkusha (heart's delight) is one of the most celebrated of the parks belonging to the king; it is planted and laid out with great care and taste, open glades being cut through the thick forest, in which numerous herds of antelopes, Indian deer, and the gigantic variety of this interesting species, the nylghau, are seen disporting. This park abounds with monkeys, which are held sacred; for, though the Moslem religion has the ascendancy, that of the Hindoo is not only tolerated, but allowed the fullest enjoyment of its superstitions: the monkeys in this district are under the guardianship of a party of faqueers, who have established themselves in the private park of a Mohammedan monarch. The palace of Delkusha possesses no great exterior pretensions to elegance, but it is handsomely fitted up, and, in common with the other royal residences, contains toys and *bijouterie* sufficient to stock a whole bazaar of curiosity shops.

The pigeons belonging to Lucknow even exceed in number those of Benares, and other places where they are objects of reverence; here they are more esteemed for their beauty than for any peculiar sanctity, and the different breeds are preserved

with the greatest care. On the summits of nearly all the roofs of the palaces, particularly the zennanas, these interesting birds are seen in flocks of from seventy to a hundred in each; they are selected for the beauty of their plumage, and each variety is kept in a separate flock. Boys are employed to teach them different evolutions in their flights. When on the wing, they keep in a cluster, and at a whistle fly off into the fields of air, ascend, descend, or return home as the signal directs. When turning suddenly, and darting towards the sun, the gleam of their variegated necks produces a beautiful effect, and when they alight upon the ground, they form a carpet of the most brilliant colours and the richest design imaginable. So great is the native attachment to the amusements which these birds afford, that it is recorded of some of the sovereigns of Lucknow that, in their country excursions, "they were accompanied by their women and pigeons."

Another remarkable feature of this extraordinary city is its elephants, which are maintained in multitudes; immense numbers belong to the king, and all the nobility and rich people possess as many as their means will admit. In royal processions, festivals, and state-occasions, they appear in crowds.

A battalion of elephants, fifteen abreast, formed into a close-serried column, richly caparisoned in flowing *jhools* of scarlet and gold, with silver *howdahs*, and bearing natives of rank clothed in glittering tissues, form an imposing sight ; but this can only be seen with full effect in the open country beyond the city. Once within the streets, the jostling and confusion are tremendous, and not unfrequently, in very narrow passes, ladders, and housings, or perhaps part of the roof on the verandah of the projecting buildings, are torn away by the struggles for precedence displayed by elephants, acquainted with their strength, and entering with ardour into the resolves of the mahouts to gain or maintain the foremost places. Elephants breed in a state of domestication, and young ones not larger than a good-sized pig, are frequently seen frolicking by the side of their mothers through the streets of Lucknow,—a spectacle fraught with interest to the eye of a European stranger. Camels are equally numerous, and, when handsomely caparisoned, add considerably to the splendour of a procession. The king's stud does not consist of fewer than a thousand horses, many of which are perfect specimens of the finest breeds, and are considered paragons of their kind ; these are brought

— out to increase the splendour of his retinue, and, even upon ordinary occasions, his suwarree exceeds in multitude and variety any European notion of ostentatious show. When seeking amusement at his numerous parks and gardens, the king is attended by immense numbers of people, and spare equipages of every description, dogs, hawks, hunting leopards, with their keepers; and an almost endless train of guards and domestics, both on horseback and on foot, form his multitudinous accompaniments; and though the delight in shew, which characterizes Asiatics, may be esteemed a childish and puerile taste, and we could wish the sovereign of so interesting a territory to be guided by nobler aims and to seek higher pursuits, one can scarcely desire that these pomps and pageantries, the relics of old romance, should be numbered with by-gone things.

Both the present and former rulers of Oude have manifested a strong partiality for European fashions and European manufactures, but their love of novelty has not been productive of any national improvement; they have thought of nothing beyond some idle gratification or indulgence, and their minds have not expanded, or their views become more enlightened, by constant intercourse with the

people who possess so much knowledge, both moral and political. A great number of foreigners have for many years been attached to the court of the king of Oude; a large proportion unquestionably might be styled mere adventurers, ignorant of every art excepting that which teaches them to profit by the follies and weaknesses of mankind; but there were others of a superior order, from whom many lessons of the highest practical utility might have been acquired.

The king of Oude has selected English officers for his aides-de-camp, his physicians belong to the Company's medical establishment, and he has also other persons of equal rank and intelligence attached to his household. An artist of great respectability and very considerable talent grew old in the service of Saadut Ali and his successor. This gentleman retired, at an advanced age, to spend the remainder of his days at Cawnpore, where he kept up a handsome establishment, and, until the loss of his daughter and increasing infirmities rendered him averse to society, had been wont to exercise the most extensive hospitality to the residents of the station. The place of Mr. Home is supplied, at the court of Lucknow, by Mr. George Beechy, who had distinguished him-

self by several masterly efforts of the pencil before he left England, and whose portrait of a native female, sent over and exhibited two years ago at Somerset House, attracted the attention of the best judges of the art. It is said,—but whether on sufficient authority we are unable to state,—that Asiatic prejudices had been so far remitted as to allow this gentleman access to the royal zenana, for the purpose of taking the portrait of the favourite wife. Such an innovation cannot fail to produce very important results; and there are too many indications of a similar nature occurring all over British India, to render it at all doubtful that, at no very distant period, the whole fabric of jealous restriction will give way, and that the women of Hindostan will receive the full enjoyment of liberty so long denied.

The Christian community of Lucknow is rather considerable when compared to that of other native cities; a great many of the shopkeepers and persons holding offices about the court are half-castes; and there are a multitude of hangers-on, of the same religion, who, attracted by the hope of enriching themselves under a monarch whose splendour and liberality have been of course exaggerated by report, pick up a subsistence, where

they had expected to find an easy path to wealth. The military cantonments, in which the Company's battalions are garrisoned, are situated at some distance from the city, where their neighbourhood acts as a salutary check, without creating the annoyance a more close association would naturally produce. There are turbulent spirits amongst the population of Lucknow, that can ill brook the military superiority of their British rulers, and, however hopeless the attempt, would gladly measure swords with them; but this hostility is not so general as some persons have asserted, and it is rarely manifested except upon some strong provocation.

Europeans have made complaints of the insolence which they have sustained in passing through the city without a numerous train of attendants; their palanquin-doors have been rudely opened, and other marks of disrespect evinced; but, though such things may have happened, conduct of this nature is by no means general, and in most cases, upon investigation, it would be found that the natives were not the first aggressors. The character of the complainant should always be taken into consideration; some Europeans are so imperious and exacting, that they see nothing but insolence and

defiance upon the part of those who do not approach them with servility and homage; while others, who think less of their own importance, are struck with the urbanity and courtesy which seem almost innate in natives of any intellectual pretensions. Thus, at a party given by the king of Oude, very contradictory reports will be disseminated respecting the conduct of the native visitants towards the European guests. From one we shall hear a triumphant account of his having succeeded in maintaining an upper seat in a struggle with some rude Mussulman, anxious to uphold his own dignity, and to lower the pride of the English; while another will dilate upon the polite attention he has received, and upon the gentlemanly manners and address, which, as a prevailing characteristic, exceeds that of more civilized countries. No Frenchmen have better command over their countenances when conversing with persons ill-acquainted with their language; they betray no disgust at the ungrammatical, vulgar phrases introduced by those who are only accustomed to talk to their servants, though they themselves are choice in their expressions, having a vocabulary quite distinct from that of the lower orders, and deeming it the height of ill-breeding to deviate

from the established rule. Unfortunately, this graciousness of demeanour, and tolerance of solecisms arising from an imperfect acquaintance with foreign manners and customs, is not very general amongst the English residents in India. They are glad to escape from society which is irksome to them, and it seems their endeavour to make their intercourse with the better classes of natives as brief as possible. This spirit will account for the little progress which knowledge has made at the court of Lucknow; and it seems a reproach to the Europeans attached to the residency, rather than to the natives themselves, that so much superstition and almost brutal ignorance should still prevail amongst a people eminently capable of becoming wise and enlightened. It is scarcely possible to imagine any thing more childish than the belief in omens, the notions of lucky and unlucky days, by which the most serious transactions of life are regulated by the king and his courtiers; and their utter ignorance of the principles which actuate men of honour, or indeed of common morality, would be incredible, were it not supported by well known and undeniable evidence.

Aga Meer, the favourite minister of the late king, had incurred the deepest hatred of his suc-

cessor, not only by the odium which he brought upon the government by his rapacity and cruelty, but on account of personal offences, which could neither be forgotten nor forgiven. A shew of reconciliation had taken place previous to the death of the then reigning monarch; and his son, released from confinement, readily agreed to bury the past in oblivion. Once seated on the throne, the opportunities which offered themselves to satiate long-smothered vengeance, could not be rejected. Aga Meer, justly alarmed for his safety, took refuge at the residency. The meditated blow was arrested, and the king, much to his mortification, discovered that he could neither take the life, nor seize the property, of the disgraced minister, both being under English protection. He, therefore, though reluctantly, contented himself with making him a prisoner in his own palace, the power which he was permitted to exercise extending no farther. Aga Meer's riches consisted of jewels and coin to a vast amount; these he had improvidently suffered to accumulate in his own house, instead of taking measures to secure them in foreign banks. There would have been little or no difficulty in effecting his own escape, but it was quite impossible to convey such

bulky treasures away in secret. His servants and satellites were, however, instructed to make the most tempting offers to young English officers, whose spirit and enterprize it was thought might achieve this anxiously desired object; but the attempt was too hopeless to be undertaken.

Aga Meer, at one time, endeavoured to practise an old and common stratagem; but such stage-tricks are now worn out in Asiatic theatres. He asked leave to send his women away, and loaded their palanquins with jewels. On the present occasion, female privacy was not respected; the palanquins were searched, and Aga Meer was glad to get them back within his own walls. Though the minister despaired of effecting his purpose, the king felt extremely apprehensive that some powerful aid would be raised up in favour of a man possessed of such enormous wealth, and that he,—and the sequel proved that he was not wrong in his conjecture,—would be disappointed of the golden prize.

Aga Meer's death now became an object of the greatest importance, and in the opinion of the monarch's friends and confidant's, an easy mode of effecting it presented itself. The health of the prisoner, somewhat injured by anxiety and confine-

ment, was entrusted to the care of a medical officer of the Company's establishment. This gentleman, in whom Aga Meer reposed the greatest confidence, was pitched upon by the conspirators for the instrument of their project. Nothing doubting that he would fall readily into their schemes, two exceedingly polite and plausible persons paid him a visit, and after a few hints, not easy to be understood by a man of high moral principles, proceeded to say that he would greatly oblige and gratify the king by administering a dose of poison to Aga Meer, a service which would be rewarded by the gift of a lac of rupees. Somewhat embarrassed by this extraordinary proposition, and not knowing how far his character might be implicated by its having been made to him, the gentleman dissembled his indignation and horror; asking time for consideration, he dismissed his guests, and repairing to the residency, laid the whole affair before the chief personage appointed by the Company to superintend the affairs of Oude. The surgeon was instructed to appoint another meeting, and to enter into some specific arrangement, which should fully commit the persons who had contrived this cold-blooded scheme. They did not hesitate to bring a deposit of half the money, and when surprised by

some unseen witnesses of their interview, could not be made to comprehend the disgust which their proposal had occasioned. They seemed to think it very extraordinary that a poor man should refuse to enrich himself upon such easy terms, dwelling with great complacency upon the facility with which the whole affair might be managed, by the substitution of some deadly drug for a dose of medicine. Upon consideration, the resident deemed it most advisable to hush up this affair, but it was commonly talked of amongst the European community; and the writer of the present narrative received the whole account from the lips of the principal actor, who gave a most interesting, as well as amusing, description of the surprise which the discovery of his scruples elicited.

In little more than a year after this transaction Aga Meer obtained his release, but it was not effected without the most spirited interference on the part of the Governor-general, whose determination to compel the king of Oude to yield up his long-desired victim, could not be resisted. A regiment of cavalry was sent over to Lucknow to escort the prisoner across the frontier, and the whole of the garrison of Cawnpore were under orders to march, and lay siege to the capital of Oude, in

case the king should refuse to allow Aga Meer to depart with all his treasure. The writer was at Cawnpore at the period of this important transit. It was a time of considerable excitement, though the result could scarcely justify a doubt. Amongst the young military men, nothing was more eagerly desired than a *tamasha* of the kind, and at one time great hopes were entertained of the king's obstinacy: but he was too wise to allow passion to o'er-master prudence, and with little less than Pharoah's reluctance, suffered his enemy to depart unscathed. Aga Meer's treasures, amounting, it was said, to the enormous sum of twenty-five crores of rupees (as many millions sterling), were conveyed across the Ganges in eight hundred hackeries (bullock-carts); he established himself at Cawnpore, purchasing several of the most beautiful of the houses which had been built by the English residents for their own accommodation, at a period in which they could better afford to lodge sumptuously than at the present day. Aga Meer did not survive his emancipation very long; the circumstances of his death are enveloped in mystery, and rumours are abroad that the vengeance of the king of Oude overtook him at the moment in which he enjoyed a fancied security. His wealth also, it is said, un-

accountably disappeared ; many of his servants, after his decease, were in a state of destitution from the impossibility of procuring the payment of their wages, which had been long in arrears.

Those who are acquainted with all the particulars of his eventful life,—and they are known to many,—could furnish a very interesting memoir of this subtle adventurer, and the information conveyed by such a narrative would throw considerable light upon the complicated net-work of the affairs of Oude. Originally a common *mussalchee*, or scullion, Aga Meer contrived to ingratiate himself with his superiors, and rose at length to the highest appointment in the state. His rapacity is said to have known no bounds, and if he sanctioned half the acts of cruelty and oppression which are laid to his charge, no monster in the human form ever committed crimes of more fearful magnitude. Reverencing neither sex nor age, upon any pretext for the seizure of property, his myrmidons were directed to violate the sacred precincts of the *senana*. The males of the family, bound by the dearest ties of honour to prevent such an outrage, were usually slain in the rash attempt ; while the women, unable to survive the disgrace of exposure to the rude gaze, and still ruder touch, of lawless men, threw

themselves into the wells, perishing miserably by their own hands. Whole families were thus swept away, their habitations were razed to the ground, and their inheritance became the prey of the spoiler.

Though many Europeans might have been tempted by the hope of a rich reward to effect the deliverance of Aga Meer, none felt any pity for the captive, or deemed his fate unmerited. In our ignorance of the motives which actuated the Governor-general's resolute interposition in his behalf, we are not justified in condemning the measures he adopted; but it was generally considered rather hard upon the king of Oude, that so notorious a delinquent should have been suffered to carry away the wealth he had wrung from an impoverished country. Succeeding ministers have been little less oppressive than Aga Meer. Hukeem Mhendee Ali, who, during the period of his former disgrace, entered into very extensive mercantile concerns at Futtighur, has been recalled, but is now again in banishment; rumours are afloat that the late failures in Calcutta, though long threatening, were ultimately occasioned by the sudden withdrawal of a very large sum of money from one of the agency-houses by this person, who, it is said, was incited

to revenge himself upon those members of the government who refused to support him in the administration of the affairs of Oude.

Oude is still celebrated for the barbarous spectacles in which, by a strange perversion of taste, men in all ages and countries have taken delight. While cock-fighting continues to be a favourite amusement in England, we ought not, perhaps, to visit the combats of wild beasts, which take place on occasions of great festivity at Lucknow, with the reprehension which such inhuman sports should call forth. Upon the arrival of a new resident, the visit of a commander-in-chief, or any occasion of equal importance, the court of Lucknow is seen in all its glory. It is the custom for one of the princes to meet the expected guest at the distance of perhaps two days' march from the city ; the *cortège* at these times is very resplendent, the cavalcade being composed of a vast body of elephants, attended by battalions of infantry and cavalry, led-horses, palanquins, heralds, mace-bearers, and a nondescript-throng of half-armed and half-naked pedestrians. It is the fashion for one of the great men to invite the other to partake his howdah ; the two retinues join, and with all the noise they can make, and all the dust they can kick up, the whole *suwarree*

sweeps along the road—the irregular cavalry darting out in all directions, displaying their horsemanship, and their skill as spear and swordsmen, by carrying on a running tilt, charging, careering, and curvetting, without the slightest consideration of any impediment in the shape of bank or ditch. The king himself makes his appearance at the outskirts of the city, and the same ceremonies are gone through; the honoured guest is invited to share the monarch's howdah; and an embrace, performed in public, shows the amicable terms which the two governments are upon with each other.

It is astonishing how few accidents occur from the jostling and concussion of these promiscuous multitudes of horse and foot. Elephants, fortunately, rarely take any delight in wanton mischief; their sagacity enables them to estimate the damage they might commit, and, even when most incited to action, they are careful of the lives and limbs of the multitude around them. Natives ride so admirably, that, notwithstanding the incurable vice of their horses, those who have been accustomed to the field are rarely or ever thrown; there will, however, be always some inexpert horsemen, where no one will walk if he can by any means mount himself; and hence the necessity of attendant grooms,

armed with spears, whose business it is to keep off loose steeds, which, after throwing their riders, attack others with the ferocity of wild beasts, tearing at every thing that comes in their way. It is the etiquette, upon a triumphal entry of this description, for the king to give a breakfast to his guests, and this is always attempted in the European fashion. Though splendid in its kind, and closely resembling its model, there are always some inattentions to minute particulars, which mar the whole affair; thus the tea and coffee are never served up hot, and the forks which are only put into requisition upon such occasions, look as if they had been thrown into a godown since the last entertainment, a year or two before, and left to accumulate rust and dirt.

It is exceedingly difficult to make native servants comprehend the propriety of serving up tea while it is hot; such a thing may be compassed in private families, but never at a public entertainment, where, in order to be ready, every thing is prepared a long time before it is wanted. Old campaigners usually contrive to bring a supply of such things as are essential to their own comfort. The writer, at a very large assembly of the kind, had the good fortune to find the only vacant seat at table next a

gentleman who had provided himself with a tripod of charcoal, and other means and appliances for a comfortable breakfast. The tea-kettle was singing merrily outside the door, and the careful *khidmut-ghar* had ensconced the tea-pot under his master's chair. The neighbours came in for a portion of the beverage which "cheers but not inebriates," and which afforded a very requisite refreshment after an encounter with the dust and fatigue attendant upon a native spectacle. The *khansamah* of the king of Oude, however, must not suffer in his character of caterer, on account of little discrepancies, perhaps not in his power to remedy or avoid.

Bishop Heber has borne honourable testimony to the culinary powers of the *maître-d'hotel* who officiated during his sojourn; and the writer can never forget a certain fowl, prepared by the hands of the king's especial attendant (for *khansamahs*, though they have cooks under them, always superintend the process themselves), which a Ude or a Carême might view with envy. It was roasted, and served up whole, but so spiced and saturated with curry-powder, as to form no bad representation of a salamander. It may not be unimportant to add, that the preparation, though excellent in its kind, which goes under the name of the king of Oude's sauce,

does not bear any resemblance to the zests and relishes of various descriptions which are served up at the king's table ; the chetney's and sweet pickles, for which Lucknow is famous, and which, especially the latter, London oilmen would do well to import or imitate.

The etiquette at the court of Oude differs considerably from that of Delhi ; though in both the receiving and presenting nuzzurs form the principal ceremonial. In imitation of European sovereigns, the king gives his portrait set in diamonds to ambassadors and other persons of rank, this distinction being also bestowed upon the aides-de-camp, and officers who have accepted situations of equal honour at the court. There is nothing very remarkable about the audience-chamber, but the king's throne is extremely splendid. It is a square platform, raised two feet from the ground, with a railing on three sides, and a canopy supported upon pillars ; of these the frame-work is wood, but the casing pure gold, set with precious stones of great value ; the canopy is of crimson-velvet richly embroidered with gold, and finished with a deep fringe of pearls ; the cushions, on which the king is seated, are also of embroidered velvet ; and the emblem of royalty, the chattah, is of the same, with a deep

fringe of pearls. The king appears literally covered with jewels, the whole of the body down to the waist being decorated with strings of diamonds, rubies, emeralds, &c.; his crown is a perfect constellation of gems, and overshadowed by plumes of the bird of paradise. A native of rank stands on either side of the throne, waving chowries of peacocks' feathers set in gold handles. To the right of the throne are gilt chairs for the accommodation of the resident and his wife, if he be a married man, the rank of the British ambassador (who certainly acts the part of viceroy over the king) being recognized as equal to that of the monarch himself; he is the only person permitted the use of the chattah, the chowrie, and the hookah, in the sovereign's presence. The English persons attached to the residency take up their position behind and at the side of these chairs, standing; those in the service of the king wearing very handsome court-dresses of puce-coloured cloth, richly embroidered with gold. The left of the throne is occupied by natives of rank holding high official situations, splendidly attired in the picturesque costume of the country. The prime-minister stands at the king's feet to receive and present the nuzzurs. These consist of money, from twenty-one gold mohurs down to

a few rupees in silver, according to the circumstances of the parties. The person offering advances to the throne with many salaams, and having his gift placed upon a folded handkerchief, presents it to the king to touch in token of acceptance; it is then given to the minister, who adds it to the heap by his side. After this ceremony, the king and the resident rise; the former takes from the hands of a person in waiting certain necklaces composed of silver ribbon, ingeniously plaited, which offer a cheap mode of conferring distinction; the investiture is made by the king in person; and upon taking leave, the resident is accompanied by the king to the entrance, where he salutes him with a short sentence, "God be with you!" pouring *atta* on his hands at the final exit. Should the ambassador happen to be in great favour at the time, the compliment is extended to all the English visitants as they pass out.

Titles of honour, *khillauts*, and their accompanying distinctions,—such as an elephant fully caparisoned, a charger, or a palanquin—are frequently conferred upon these court-days; the *nuzur* is then of proportionate value, persons anxiously coveting some grant or distinction offering not less than a lac of rupees; this sum is conveyed in

a hundred bags, covered with crimson silk, tied with a silver ribbon, and so solid a proof of attachment is not unfrequently rewarded by an embrace before the whole court, a mark of royal favour well worth the money bestowed upon it, since any person's fortune is made in native states, who is known to have interest at court.

The king's dinners are better than his breakfasts; there is abundance of wine for the English guests, and though the native visitants do not partake in public, many confess that they indulge at their own tables. Nautches and fireworks conclude the evening's entertainment; the latter can never be shewn off to so much advantage as in an Indian city. where the buildings they illuminate are of the same fairy-like nature. No description can do justice to the scene presented on some fine, dark, clear night, when the Goomtee is covered with boats, of those long canoe-shaped graceful forms, belonging to the king, some resembling alligators, others swans, peacocks, or dolphins, enamelled in various colours, intermingled with gold, and filled with a splendid company glittering in gems and tissues. Blue lights, so artfully disposed as not to be visible, while they clothe the whole pageant with their unearthly gleams, render every adjacent object dis-

tinged; and as the blaze of ten thousand rockets bursts forth, palaces, mosques, and temples seem to rise majestically during the brief illumination. In the next moment, all is dark save the pageant on the Goomtee; and again minarets and domes, cupolas and spires spring up, silver and gold, as the marble and the gilding catch the vivid gleams of jets and spouts of fire ascending to the skies.

CHAPTER VI.

MAHOMMEDAN FESTIVALS.

THE poor remnants of splendour still possessed by the court of Delhi, are mustered and displayed with some approximation to former pomp at the annual celebration of the *Buckra Eade* ; but it is at Lucknow that the most imposing spectacle takes place at this festival. The followers of Mahomet claim to be descendants of the patriarch, through his son Ishmael, who they aver to have been chosen for the offering of the Almighty, and not Isaac : thus differing from the belief of Jews and Christians, and supporting their assertion, in contradiction to the authority of the Bible, by writings which, in their opinion, contain sufficient evidence in favour of their claims. The offering thus made to Heaven is commemorated by the sacrifice of particular animals, camels, sheep, goats, kids, or lambs, according to each person's means ; this is supposed to answer a double purpose, not only honouring the

memory of Abraham and Ishmael, but the sacrifices assisting in a time of great need. It is supposed that the entrance to Parádise is guarded by a bridge made of a scythe or some instrument equally sharp, and affording as unstable a footing. The followers of the prophet are required to skait or skim over this passage, and it will be attended with more or less difficulty, according to the degree of favour they have obtained in the sight of heaven. The truly pious will be wafted over in safety, but the undeserving must struggle many times, and be often cut down in the attempt, before they can gain the opposite side. In this extremity, it is imagined that the same number and kind of animals, which, being clean and esteemed fitting for sacrifice, they have offered up at the celebration of the Buckra Eade, will be in waiting to convey them in safety along the perilous passage of the bridge. Under this belief, the richer classes of Mahommedans supply their indigent brethren with goats and sheep for the sacrifice: a work of charity incited by the purest motives, and which, if not possessing all the efficacy ascribed to it, at least furnishes the poor man's house with an ample and a welcome feast; for though poverty compels the lower classes of Mus-sulmans to imitate the Hindoos in the frugality of

a vegetable meal, they never refuse meat when it is procurable.

Great preparations are made at Lucknow for the celebration of the Buckra Eade; a busy scene takes place upon the river, where the elephants are sent to bathe for the occasion. One at least of these animals being kept by every person who can afford to maintain them, the multitude of elephants, in a population estimated at three hundred thousand persons, may be imagined. Since our acquaintance with the interior of South America has increased, we have become familiar with the appearance of beggars on horseback; but it is only, perhaps, at Lucknow that one of the fraternity aspires to an elephant. A few years ago, a mendicant, who went by the name of Shah Jee, being in high favour with the king, to whom it is said he had predicted things which afterwards came to pass, was permitted to levy contributions through the city, and, mounted upon an elephant, demanded five cowries daily of every shopkeeper. The tax upon each individual was very small, it taking four-score of these shells to make up the value of a half-penny; but the sum, when collected throughout all the bazaars of the place, amounted to a very considerable revenue.

After the elephants have been well washed in the

river, their skins are oiled, and their heads painted with various devices ; they are then decorated in their embroidered jhools, many of which have gold borders a quarter of a yard in depth, and these are surmounted by howdahs, either painted to resemble enamel, or formed entirely of silver. The caparisons of the horses are not less magnificent ; the saddles and stirrups are of solid silver, and large silver necklaces, composed of pendant medallions spread over the chest, have a very beautiful effect, and give out a tinkling sound as the animal, proud of his trappings, prances along. The tails are dyed of a bright scarlet, and some have stars and crescents painted on their haunches. Gold is sometimes substituted for silver in the caparisons of these animals, and where ornaments of this kind are too costly for the purses of the owners, decorations not so rich, but equally gay, are substituted. The necklace is composed of beads, and the head is adorned with tufts of variegated silk, which have a very picturesque effect. Camels are usually decorated in the same manner, it not being very often that, with the exception of the bells attached to their collars, silver ornaments are bestowed upon animals more esteemed for their utility than for the beauty of their appearance, or

as an appendage of state. The camel is perhaps underrated, for, as an adjunct to an Oriental pageant, he is of great importance; the nodding heads, arched necks, and conical backs of these animals, though grotesque in themselves, add greatly to the effect of a mingled body of elephants, horses, and men; an Asiatic group never being perfect except when camels form a portion of it. The animals intended for sacrifice at the celebration of the Buckra Eade, are conveyed to a place at some distance from the city, built for the purpose of containing them, and called the Eade-Gaarh, a court or quadrangle, surrounded by a bastioned wall, and entered by lofty gateways.

The processions at Delhi and Lucknow are particularly imposing, that of Delhi owing the greater portion of its splendour to the retinues of the Omrahs and great men of the court, while at Lucknow the *cortège* of the king renders every attempt at imitation hopeless. All his troops appear upon this day in new clothing, and the *coup d'œil* is rendered more effective by an attention to minute particulars generally neglected in native arrangements; Asiatics paying little regard to consistence. The van of the cavalcade is formed of fifty camels, carrying swivels, each accompanied by a driver

and two gunners in white uniforms, with turbans and cummerbunds of red and green, the colours of the cloth composing the housings of the camels. A park of artillery succeeds, the gunners being clothed in blue uniforms; next two troops of cavalry, in the picturesque vests worn by suwars, of scarlet cloth, with pointed caps of black lamb-skin. After these a regiment of foot, only half-clad, in wild barbaric costume, the trowser scarcely extending mid-way down the thigh, where it is vandyked with black points: they have red jackets and small turbans of black leather, and the warlike but dissonant music of the *dunkah*, or kettle-drum, assimilates well with the strange fantastic display made by these troops. The *nujeebs* are closely followed by the most gorgeous portion of the spectacle, the elephant-carriages of the king and his court; the great satrap himself sits enthroned in a sort of triumphal car of silver, canopied and curtained with crimson velvet, embroidered and fringed with gold, and drawn by four elephants exactly matched in colour, height, and size. The others have only two elephants each, but all glitter with gold and silver, and the gallant company, so proudly borne along, shine from head to foot in gems and brocade. Their turbans are adorned with costly aigrettes of

jewels; clasps, studs, belts, rings, and bracelets, of the most precious treasures of the mine, appear in the greatest profusion, down to the gem-enamelled slipper, and these are set off by the graceful flow of drapery composed of the most beautifully-woven tissues, and shawls of the finest fabric. Round these chariots, *chobdars* (mace-bearers), *chuprassies*, *hurkaras*, and other state attendants—some brandishing sheathed scimitars, and others fanning the air with *chowries*—shout out the titles of the illustrious and puissant personages to whom they belong; while a cloud of irregular horse hover on either side, tilting and curvetting apparently with disorderly recklessness, yet in reality conducting their evolutions with the most consummate skill. The king's led horses follow to swell the pomp and the parade; they are all richly caparisoned, and attended by grooms in handsome liveries. The royal *paalkie* and palanquin next appear; these native vehicles are of the most splendid description, constructed entirely of wrought gold, each carried by bearers clad in long scarlet vests, embroidered with gold, their turbans ornamented with the emblems of royalty. The state-carriage also forms a portion of this part of the shew; it is of English make, drawn by eight black horses, driven in hand by an

European coachman in scarlet livery, or rather uniform. The English gentlemen composing the foreign portion of the king's suite appear in their court-dresses, mounted upon elephants, and after them a long train of the native nobility, also mounted in the same manner, the whole being closed by horse and foot soldiers, those belonging to the India Company marching with their colours unfurled, and their bands playing, while hundreds of banneroles, of gold and silver tissue, flaunt in the air in every direction.

Notwithstanding the want of order and discipline, which seems essential to the movement of so large a body, the procession arrives at its place of destination without being materially disarranged by the apparent confusion, which is considerably augmented by the clashing of instruments, those of Europe striving with hopeless efforts to vie with the clang and clamour of the native trumpet and drum. The cavalcade being drawn up at the place appointed, the superior priest or moollah, after going through the usual religious service, presents a knife to the king, who, repeating a prayer, plunges his weapon into the throat of a camel, the victim selected for sacrifice. The artillery-men are all in readiness, and when the

signal is given of the completion of the ceremony by the king himself, a general discharge of musquetry and cannon announces the circumstance to the whole of the city. The religious part of the festival is then ended, and the rejoicings begin. The camel thus slaughtered is served up at the royal table, on the only occasion in which the flesh of this animal is eaten in Hindostan; portions are sent as presents, a gift which is supposed to confer no small degree of honour; and the European residents, both at Lucknow and at Delhi, are often complimented with a share. The feasting is universal, for it being an essential duty on the part of the Mahommedans to dispense to others the bounties and blessings which they themselves receive, the poor on this day partake of the luxuries of the rich man's table. Upon his return to the city, the king of Oude holds a court, and the Buckra Eade is often chosen as the period of conferring honour and titles. Formerly it was the custom for Europeans to receive regular patents of nobility from native courts; but this does not appear to be common at present, the honour being little coveted by people who affect to look down upon Asiatic dignities. On the presentation of a *khillaut*, titles of honour are always included, and the heralds are

very liberal in their proclamations, especially at Delhi, where it is cheaper and consequently more expedient to substitute high-sounding words for more solid marks of royal favour. Many Governor-generals and Commanders-in-chief have been made omrabs, khans, or nawabs by the king of Delhi; yet it is very questionable whether any have thought it worth their while to have these titles confirmed according to the etiquette practised concerning those conferred at European courts; and both the *khillaut* and the title seem now to have degenerated into an idle ceremony, which, as far as Europeans are concerned, means nothing but an empty compliment. With natives, however, the rank and consequence of each individual materially depend upon the degree of estimation in which he is known to be held at court; certain distinctions are withheld from the multitude, which are eagerly coveted, and made the subject of much cabal and intrigue. The rank of a party is known by his equipage, palanquins of a peculiar construction being only permitted to privileged persons, who receive them with the grant of their titles from the king.

The festivities of the Buckra Eade are concluded by nautches and fire-works; every palace through-

out the city of Lucknow is illuminated ; the river is covered with boats filled with musicians and dancing-girls, and though the rejoicings are more strictly private in the zenanas, they too have their share : the ladies, sumptuously attired, and laden with jewels, congregate together ; dances of a more decorous nature than those exhibited to male eyes are performed before them, and after a luxurious banquet, they indulge with never-failing zest in the hookah and pān.

Notwithstanding the time occupied in the procession to the Eade-Gaarh, or in the court or durbar held after it, the king contrives to devote a portion of the day to the favourite spectacle, the wild-beast fights, at which, strange to say, many European ladies submit to be present. A public breakfast also to the members of the Residency forms a part of the entertainments. In so anomalous a proceeding as the appearance of females at an Asiatic court, there can of course be no established rule respecting their dress ; convenience more than etiquette is consulted, and the ladies do not scruple to attend these breakfasts in morning dresses, and in bonnets. During the reign of those enormous hats, which scarcely fell short of a carriage-wheel in circumference, the king of Oude experienced

considerable difficulty in the investiture of the *haarh*, or necklace; the tinsel garland, on more than one occasion, stuck half-way, producing no little embarrassment on the part of the lady, and compelling the king to abandon the hope of performing his part of the ceremony with his accustomed grace.

Few things surprise the natives of India more than the changes in European fashions; no sooner has an unfortunate *dirzee* (tailor) mastered the intricacies of a folded body, than he has to exert his bewildered faculties upon the production of another, without plait or pucker; some ladies, who are unable to afford any instructions to their work-people, exhibit prints of fashions to the wondering eyes of these poor men, who gaze upon them with amazed and hopeless countenances, honestly acknowledging their inability to follow such a guide. The mysterious phraseology in which the milliners of Paris and London are wont to envelop their descriptions, are equally puzzling to the ladies themselves; and strange indeed are some of the articles produced by the joint-efforts of the mystified *dirzee*, and his equally perplexed mistress. This state of things is not very propitious to feminine display; and, accordingly, it must reluctantly

be said that the court at Lucknow does not derive any additional lustre from the ladies of the Residency when they make their appearance at it, the effect being rather diminished than heightened by the contrast of the somewhat plain if not dowdy apparel of the fair visitants, with the gorgeous shew of the Asiatic groups.

The king of Oude is often present at the celebration of European marriages, and upon one occasion, at least, gave the bride away; a strange office for a Mahommedan monarch to perform to a Christian lady. The rigid laws made and enacted by the British government, are in a slight degree relaxed when such a circumstance takes place, and the bride is permitted to retain the string of pearls with which the king encircles her neck. At other festivals, the situation of English ladies is exceedingly tantalizing; they see trays laid at their feet containing shawls such as had haunted their early dreams, dazzling brocades of silver, and necklaces of glittering gems. These are offered to their acceptance with flattering compliments, in which they are told that all the riches of the kingdom shall be at their disposal. They are content with the portion assigned to them, but see,—and sometimes the sight brings tears into their eyes,—the tempting

treasures seized by a government *chuprassy*, and restored to the place from whence they came. It is necessary that the resident should be made of very stern stuff to resist the pleadings of young ladies, who implore him to make an exception in their particular case from the general rule so despotically enforced, and resistance is rendered more difficult by the good-humoured endeavours of the natives to second the fair damsels' wishes. Confidential servants sometimes contrive to rescue a shawl or two from the hands of the Philistines, and after the whole *nussur* has been hopelessly surrendered, a part has been clandestinely conveyed, under cover of the night, to the private apartment of the disconsolate fair one, who, if unmarried, and therefore not implicating any one but herself, does not feel bound to respect the ordinances of the government, and accepts with as little scruple as if she were purchasing some piece of contraband goods in England.

The celebration of the Mohurram, in all large Mahommedan communities of the Sheah sect, though, strictly speaking, a fast of the most mournful kind, is accompanied by so much pomp and splendour, that strangers are at some loss to distinguish it from festivals of pure rejoicing. In no

part of India is this interesting anniversary of the Moslem year commemorated with more zeal and enthusiasm than at Lucknow.

It is certain that the Sheah sect, who are settled in Hindostan, are in some degree obnoxious to the charge brought against them by their enemies, of introducing rites and ceremonies almost bordering upon idolatry in their devotion to the memory of the Imaums Hossein and Houssien. Imbibing a love of shew from long domestication with a people passionately attached to pageantry and spectacle, they have departed from the plainness and simplicity of the worship of their ancestors, and in the decorations of the *taxees*, and the processions which accompany them to the place of sepulture, display their reverential regard for Ali and his sons in a manner which would be esteemed scandalous if thus accompanied in Persia and Arabia, where the grief of the Sheah is more quietly and soberly manifested, without the admixture of those theatrical exhibitions, which so wonderfully excite and inflame the mind at the celebration of this festival all over India.

Several processions take place during the celebration of the Mohurrum. At Lucknow, on the fifth day, the banners are carried to a celebrated

shrine, or *durgah*, in the neighbourhood, to be consecrated, it being supposed that the standard of Hossein, miraculously pointed out to a devout believer, is preserved at this place. The veneration in which this sacred relic is held, nearly equalling that which in some places in Europe is displayed towards pieces of the true cross, affords another proof of the corruption of the Mahommedan religion by the Sheah sect of India. The *durgah* at Lucknow is not only visited at the commemoration of Hossein's obsequies, but prayers and oblations are offered in its holy precincts, upon recovery from illness, or any other occasion which calls for praise and thanksgiving. The gifts deposited at the *durgah*, consisting of money, clothes, and other valuable articles, become the property of the officiating priest, who is expected to disburse the greater portion in charity. All the Moslem inhabitants of Lucknow are anxious to consecrate the banners employed at the Mohurrum, by having them touched by the sacred relic, and for this purpose they are conveyed to the shrine with as much pomp and ceremony as the circumstances of the proprietors will admit. A rich man sends his banners upon elephants, surrounded by an armed guard, and accompanied by bands of music; these stand-

ards are pennant-shaped, and very long, some formed of silver or gold tissue, and all richly embroidered; they are followed by a procession on foot, clad in mourning. The arms and accoutrements, representing those worn by Hossein, are carried in some of these processions; and one of the most important features, is Dhull Dhull, the horse slain with his master on the fatal field of Kurbelah: his trappings are dyed with blood, and arrows are seen sticking in his sides. Multitudes of people form these processions, which frequently stop while the moollahs recite the oft-told, but never-tiring story, or the tragic scene is enacted by young men expert at broad-sword exercises: and as Hossein is surrounded and beaten down, musquets are fired off, and shouts and beatings of the breast attest the sincerity with which his followers bewail his untimely end.

The celebration of the Mohurram is not confined to the higher classes; every person who has a small sum to spare subscribes, with others of the same means, to purchase the necessary articles for the purpose. *Taxees* and banners of all sizes, prices, and denominations, are sold in the bazaars, and group after group are seen upon the roads and public avenues, some accompanied by the most

splendid decorations, and others content with a very humble display, but all impressed with the same desire to do honour to the martyrs. One of the most curious effects of these multitudinous assemblages, is produced by the umbrellas, or *chattahs*, which are generally very gay, and formed of various colours; they are seen in moving masses, like the billows of the sea, and have a more singular appearance when carried by persons on foot, than when they canopy the *howdah*, to which, however, they form a very magnificent appendage.

The open plains of India are calculated to shew off these processions to great advantage; and as the Mohurram takes place during the rainy season, there is no dust, and cloudy weather enables European spectators to gaze upon the pageant without danger of being blinded by the glare of a noon-day sun. On the seventh night of the Mohurram, the marriage of Hossein's daughter with her cousin, a faithful partisan of the house of Ali, is celebrated with much pomp and shew. This event really took place on the day of the battle on the plains of Kurbelah, where Hossein was surprised in his camp and compelled to combat with his enemies at the greatest disadvantage. The marriage procession repairs to some celebrated tomb or mosque in the

neighbourhood ; and at Lucknow it is sometimes directed to the Imaum-baareh, the magnificent cathedral-like edifice in which Asoph ud Dowlah, its founder, and the first king of Oude, lies buried. The interior, when fitted up for this purpose, is gorgeous beyond imagination ; and though, if examined in detail, the display will be found to resemble the gew-gaw frippery of theatric pomp, yet, when lighted up at night, and accompanied by the florid beauties of Asiatic architecture, and the picturesque assemblages of its crowds, the splendid effect of the whole disarms criticism, and the spectator abandons himself wholly to the enchantments of the scene.

The *taxee* belonging to the kings of Oude, which, strange to say, was manufactured in England, forms one of the most striking ornaments. It is formed of green glass, mounted with brass mouldings. Models in silver of holy places at Mecca are supported upon stands of the same metal, in recesses made for their reception ; the royal emblem, the fish, appears in all directions ; and selections from the armoury of the king form some of the most costly of the decorations. Few monarchs are in possession of a more valuable collection of offensive and defensive weapons. The

fire-arms are of unrivalled beauty, inlaid and set with gold and gems : while the swords and daggers, of the finest polish, have hilts of agate, lapis lazuli, chrysolite, or blood-stone, and are ornamented in relief or in intaglio, with an immense variety of figures and foliage of the most delicate patterns, wrought in gold and silver. These and other ornamental devices are reflected from numerous mirrors, and the whole is bathed in floods of light from multitudes of wax tapers and lamps of various colours. The quadrangles of the Imaum-baareh are similarly illuminated, and their vast dimensions, the beauty of their proportions, the rich grouping of the pinnacles and domes, the long arcades, lofty gateways, and tall minars, can seldom, if ever, be seen to such advantage as when the dazzling resplendence of artificial light imitates the blaze of day, without its heat and glare, and when the darkness of the surrounding atmosphere throws each illuminated building into bright relief.

The procession of the marriage of the unfortunate Cossim and his ill-fated bride is distinguished by trays bearing the wedding-presents, and covered palanquins, supposed to convey the lady and her attendants; the animals employed in the cavalcade, with the exception of the favoured Dhull Dhull,

are left outside the walls ; but the trays containing sweet-meats, &c., a model of the tomb of Cossim, and the palanquin of the bride, are brought into the interior and committed to the care of the keepers of the sanctuary, until the last day, when they make a part of the final procession to the place of interment. Dhull Dhull, trained and educated with the same attention devoted to the champion's horse at the coronation of the kings of England, is conducted round the *taxee*, and his performance, which is somewhat difficult (the polished pavement being very slippery), usually excites a proportionate degree of admiration in the spectators. Money is distributed amongst the populace, as upon the occasion of a real wedding ; and when it is considered that a strict fast is maintained during the whole period of the Mohurram, the least devout relinquishing the greater portion of their usual indulgences, the immense sums of money lavished upon the mere parade of grief seem almost incredible. Many of the followers of Ali, in addition to the austerities practised at the Mohurram, will stint themselves in clothes and food during the whole year, in order to launch forth with greater *éclat* at this time : privations partly induced by the enthusiastic affection cherished by all classes of Sheahs

for their murdered Imaums, and partly by the passion for display common to the Asiatic character.

The most extraordinary feature, however, in the commemoration of Hossein's and Houssein's death, is the participation of the Hindoos, who are frequently seen to vie with the disciples of Ali in their demonstrations of grief for the slaughter of his two martyred sons: and in the splendour of the pageant displayed at the anniversary of their fate. A very large proportion of Hindoos go into mourning during the ten days of the Mohurram, clothing themselves in green garments, and assuming the guise of fakeers. A Mahratta prince of Gwalior was distinguished for the ardour with which he entered into all the Mahommedan observances of the period. He appeared at the Durbar attired in green, wearing no ornaments excepting eight or ten strings of magnificent emeralds round his neck, even discarding his pearls, though the favourite decorations of his person, and worn in such profusion as to entitle him to the designation to which he aspired, *Motee-wallah*, 'man of pearls.'

Amongst the Mahrattas, the brahmins alone decline to join in the rites and ceremonies practised at the Mohurram, many of the wealthy sirdars constructing *taxees* at their own expense, and joining

with true Mahomedan zeal in the lamentations poured forth at the recital of the melancholy events at Kurbalah. The complaisance of the Hindoos is returned with interest at the Hoolee, the Indian Saturnalia, in which the disciples of the prophet mingle with the heartiest good will, apparently too much delighted with the general licence and frolic revelries of that strange carnival, to be withheld from joining it by horror of its heathen origin.

In many points there is a blending between the two religions, which could scarcely be expected from the intolerant disciples of Mahomet and the exclusive followers of Brahma; the former are no longer the furious and sanguinary bigots, carrying fire and sword into the temples of strange gods, and forcing conquered tribes to conform to their opinions upon pain of death. Their zeal has relaxed, and they have become vitiated by the examples around them. The courtesy of the Hindoo is more consistent, for he is of opinion that the numerous modes of worship, practised by the different nations of the earth, all emanate from the deity, and are equally acceptable to him, who prescribed various forms to suit various persons; and, under this impression, he pays respect to the holidays prescribed by the Koran, or distinguished for the commemoration of remarkable events in the life of

the prophet or his apostles. Political expedience has had some effect in producing this toleration. Hindoos have found it advantageous to their interests to assist at Mussulman ceremonies, and the faithful have not been backward in the sacrifice of religious prejudices upon occasions of great importance. Conversions have also been extremely imperfect; many of those, who conformed to the creed of Mahomet, retaining ceremonials and observances little less than idolatrous; while others of purer descent have found it almost impossible to withstand the corrupting influence of example. Yet, amidst this harmonious accordance between persons professing such opposite religions, there are occasional out-breaks, in which the Moslem and the Hindoo display all the fierceness and animosity which formerly distinguished them, against each other. Insults are offered at festivals which neither party are slow to return or avenge; and when, as it sometimes happens, the holidays of the Hindoo and the Mussulman fall together, it requires no small exertion on the part of the authorities to prevent a hostile collision. At Allahabad, on the celebration of the Mohurram, some of the leading persons repaired to the judge to request that the Hindoos, who were about to perform some of their idolatrous worship, should not be permitted

to blow their trumpets, and beat their drums, and bring their heathenish devices in contact with the sad and holy solemnity, the manifestations of their grief for the death of the Imaums. They represented, in the most lively manner, the obligation which Christians were under to support the worshippers of the true God against infidels, and were not satisfied with the assurance that they should not be molested by the intermixture of the processions, which should be strictly confined to opposite sides of the city. The Hindoos were equally tenacious in upholding their rights, and it became necessary to draw out the troops for the prevention of bloodshed.

The ceremonials observed at the celebration of the Mohurram are not confined to processions out of doors; persons of wealth and respectability having an Imaum-baareh constructed in the interior of their own dwellings. This is usually a square building, containing a hall and other apartments, in which the mourning assemblages during the period of the festival are congregated. It is decorated for the time with all the splendour which the owners can afford. The *taxee* is placed upon the side facing Mecca, under a canopy of velvet or tissue richly embroidered, and near it there is a pul-

pit very handsomely constructed of silver, ivory, ebony, or carved wood, having a flight of stairs covered with an expensive carpeting of broad-cloth, velvet, or cloth of gold. The walls on either side of the *taxee* are covered with banners, the staves being cased with embossed silver, or gold, beautifully chased, and finished at the top with a crest, or the emblem of the sect, a spread hand. The streamers are of silk richly embroidered in gold and silver, and decorated with fringes, cords, and tassels of the same. Representations of the equipments worn by Hossein at Kurbelah are placed upon cushions at the foot of the *taxee*: these consist of a splendid turban, a sword and sword-belt set with precious stones, a highly emblazoned shield, and a bow and arrows beautifully enamelled.

The *taxee* is lighted up by numerous wax candles, and near it are placed offerings of fruit and flowers presented by pious ladies to do honour to the memory of the Imaums. The remainder of the hall is fitted up with considerable splendour, furnished with mirrors which reflect the light from numerous lustres, lamps, and girandoles. Poorer persons are content with less glittering ornaments; and in all, an assemblage is held

twice a day, that in the evening being the most imposing and attractive. The guests are seated round the apartment, the centre of which is occupied by a group of hired mourners, consisting of six or eight persons. These men are usually of large stature and of considerable muscular strength. They are very scantily clothed in a drapery of green cloth, their breasts and heads being perfectly uncovered. A moollah or priest, selected on account of his superior elocution, ascends the pulpit, and proceeds to the recital of a portion of a poem in the Persian language, which contains a detailed account of the persecution and tragic fate of the Imaum. The composition is said to be very pure, and its effect upon the auditory is prodigious. After some well-wrought passage, describing the sufferings of the unhappy princes, the reader pauses, and immediately the mourners on the ground commence beating their breasts and shouting "Hosseim ! Houssen !" giving themselves such dreadful blows that it seems incredible that human nature should sustain them, until at length they sink exhausted on the ground amid the piercing cries and lamentations of the spectators. As the narrative proceeds, the interest is deepened : cries of wild despair are uttered on all sides, and even

the Christians who may be present cannot always escape the infection or refrain from tears. A part of each day's service consists of a chant in the Hindostanee language, in which the whole assembly join ; and the Sheahs end it by standing up and cursing the usurping Caliphs by name, devoting the memory of each offending individual to universal execration. The Soonees hold these solemn assemblies ; but their grief at the cruel sufferings of so many estimable members of the prophet's family, does not assume so theatrical, or it may be added, pagan a character. Attired in the deepest mourning, they evince the most profound sorrow ; and it is persons of this persuasion who manifest the greatest indignation when there is any risk of their processions being crossed by the heathen revelries of the Hindoos.

The pomps and ceremonies which preceded it are nothing to the grandeur reserved for the display on the last day of the Mohurram, when the *taxees* are borne to the place of interment. This pageant represents the military cavalcade of the battle of Kurbelah, together with the funeral procession of the young princes, and the wedding retinue of the bride and bridegroom, divorced by death upon their nuptial day. The banners are

carried in advance, the poles being usually surmounted by a crest, composed of an extended hand, which is emblematic of the five holy personages of the prophet's family, and a symbol particularly designating the Sheah sect. Many make a declaration of their religious principles by holding up the hand; the Soonnee displays three fingers only, while the Sheah extends the whole five. The horse of prince Hossein and his camp-equipage appear, furnished with all the attributes of sovereignty; some of the *taxees*, of which there is a great variety, are accompanied by a platform, on which three effigies are placed,—the ass Borak, the animal selected by Mahomet to bear him on his ride to Heaven,—and two houries, the latter, generally speaking, being frightful figures, more closely resembling demons than the idea they are intended to convey of the beauties of the Moslem paradise. The tomb of Cossim, the husband of Hossein's daughter, is honoured by being carried under a canopy; the bridal trays, palanquins, and other paraphernalia, accompany it, and the whole is profusely garlanded with flowers. When numbers of these processions, all composed of the same emblematic devices, differently ornamented, join together, the effect is exceedingly imposing, forming a

spectacle of which it is impossible to give an adequate description. Thousands and tens of thousands are frequently assembled, with long trains of horses, camels, and elephants; a certain number of the two latter are laden with cakes of the finest wheaten bread, which, at every place where the *taxees* are rested, are distributed amongst the populace; large pitchers of sherbet are also provided for the same purpose; and numbers of water-carriers are in full employment, paid by the rich and charitable to administer to the wants of the poor followers of Ali. These processions take the field at break of day, but there are so many pauses for the reading of the poem dedicated to this portion of the history of the events of Kurbelah, and such numerous rehearsals of Hossein's dying scene, that it is night before the commencement of the interment.

Devout Mussulmans walk, on these occasions, with their heads and their feet bare, beating their breasts, and tearing their hair, and throwing ashes over their persons with all the vehemence of the most frantic grief; but many content themselves with a less inconvenient display of sorrow, leaving to hired mourners the task of inciting and inflaming the multitude by their lamentations and

bewailments. The zeal and turbulence of the affliction of Ali's followers are peculiarly offensive to the Soonnees, who, professing to look upon Hossein and Houssein as holy and unfortunate members of the prophet's family, and to regret the circumstances which led to their untimely end, are shocked by the almost idolatrous frenzy displayed by their less orthodox brethren ; and the expression of this feeling often leads to serious disturbances, which break out upon the burial of the *tassees*. Private quarrels between the rival sects are frequently reserved for adjustment to this period, when, under pretext of religious zeal, each party may make an assault upon his enemy without exposing the real ground of his enmity : amongst the Mussulman sepoy's in the Company's service such feuds are but too common, and it is sometimes found expedient to march the Soonnees off to a distance during the period of the Mohurru. In a few places which border the Ganges or Jumna, the *tassees* are thrown into the river ; but generally there is a large piece of ground set apart for the purpose of the burial. It is rather a curious spectacle to see the tombs themselves consigned to earth, with the same ceremonies which would attend the inhumation of the bodies of deceased persons ;

the *taxees* are stripped of their ornaments, and when little is left except the bamboo frames, they are deposited in pits. This ceremony usually takes place by torch-light, the red glare of innumerable flambeaux adding considerably to the wild and picturesque effect of the scene. A *mussaulchee*, or torch-bearer, is, generally speaking, one of the most demoniac-looking apparitions that can be imagined. Those who follow this occupation are a poor and low class of people, burthened with a small quantity of clothing, and that stained and smeared by the greasy implements of their trade; the *mussaul* itself is merely a piece of wood entwined with filthy rags, and fed from a cruise containing a coarse thick oil, which gives out an impure and lurid flame. The swart countenances, dark limbs, and uncouth drapery of men so withered and so wild in their attire as to be easily mistaken for beings of a lower sphere, assume an even fearful aspect under the flickering light of the torches, which they brandish with strange gestures, as they rush with wild halloos along the plains. In such an illumination, the whole pageant becomes confused and indistinct; here and there some bright object catching the light, comes forth—glittering arms, or the blaze of gold and gems; but the

rest is one black phantom,—a moving mass, strange and indefinite, and rendered almost terrific by the shouts of highly-excited men and the continual discharge of musquetry.

CHAPTER VII.

ETAWAH.

IN the days of Moghul power, the native city of Etawah was a flourishing place, the abode of Omrahs and grandees belonging to the imperial court ; but with the downfall of Moslem dominion it has sunk into insignificance, and possesses few, if any, attractions, excepting to the artist, who cannot fail to admire a splendid ghaut, one of the finest on the river Jumna, and several picturesque buildings, which latter, however, are falling fast into decay. The cantonments in the neighbourhood are peculiarly desolate, and exhibit in full perfection the dreary features of a jungle-station. Upon a wide sandy plain, nearly destitute of trees, half a dozen habitable bungalows lie scattered, intermixed with the ruins of others built for the accommodation of a larger garrison than is now considered necessary for the security of the place, a single wing of a regiment of sepoys being deemed sufficient for the performance of the duties of this me-

lancholy out-post. The civilian attached to it, who discharges the joint office of judge and collector, is seldom resident, preferring any other part of the district; and the few Europeans condemned to linger out their three years of banishment in this wilderness, have ample opportunity to learn how they may contrive to exist upon their own resources. The bungalows of Etawah, though not in their primitive state,—for upon the first occupation of these remote jungles, doors and windows were not considered necessary, a *jaump*, or frame of bamboo covered with grass, answering the purpose of both—are still sufficiently rude to startle persons who have acquired their notions of India from descriptions of the City of Palaces. Heavy ill-glazed doors, smeared over with coarse paint, secure the interiors from the inclemencies of the cold, hot, and rainy seasons. The walls are mean and bare, and where attempts are made to colour them, the daubing of inexperienced workmen is more offensive to the eye than common whitewash. The fastenings of the doors leading to the different apartments, if there be any, are of the rudest description, and the small portion of wood employed is rough, unseasoned, and continually requiring repair.

The intercourse between the brute denizens of

the soil and their human neighbours is of too close a nature to be agreeable. If the doors be left open at night, moveable lattices, styled *jaffys*, must be substituted, to keep out the wolves and hyenas, which take the liberty of perambulating through the verandahs; the gardens are the haunts of the porcupine, and panthers prowl in the ravines. The *chopper*, or thatch of a bungalow, affords commodious harbour for vermin of every description; but in large stations, which have been long inhabited by Europeans, the wilder tribes, retreating to more desolate places, are rarely seen; squirrels or rats, with an occasional snake or two, form the population of the roof, and are comparatively quiet tenants. In the jungles, the occupants are more numerous and more various; wild cats, *ghosaumps* (a reptile of the lizard tribe as large as a sucking pig), *vis copras*, and others, take up their abode amid the rafters, and make wild work with their battles and their pursuit of prey. These intruders are only divided from the human inhabitants of the bungalow by a cloth, stretched across the top of each room, from wall to wall, and secured by tapes tied in a very ingenious manner behind a projecting cornice: this cloth forms the ceiling, and shuts out the unsightly rafters of the

huge barn above; but it proves a frail and often insufficient barrier; the course of the assailants and the assailed may be distinctly traced upon its surface, which yields with the pressure of the combatants, shewing distinctly the outlines of the various feet. When it becomes a little worn, legs are frequently seen protruding through some aperture, and as the tapes are apt to give way during the rains, there is a chance of the undesired appearance of some hunted animal, which, in its anxiety to escape from its pursuers, falls through a yawning rent into the abyss below. Before the introduction of cloths, snakes and other agreeable visitants often dropped from the bamboos upon the persons of those who might be reposing beneath; but although, where there are no dogs or cats to keep the lower story clear of intruders, the dwellers of the upper regions will seek the ground-floor of their own accord, they cannot so easily descend as heretofore. Notwithstanding the intervention of the cotton canopy, however, there is quite sufficient annoyance without a closer acquaintance with the parties, for night being usually selected for the time of action, sleep is effectually banished by their gambols. The noise is sometimes almost terrific, and nervous persons, females in particular, may fancy that the

whole of the machinery, cloth, fastenings and all, will come down, along with ten thousand combatants, upon their devoted heads. The sparrows in the eaves, alarmed by the hubbub, start from their slumbers, and their chirping and fluttering increase the tumult. In these wild solitudes, individuals of the insect race perform the part of nocturnal disturbers with great vigour and animation. At night-fall, a concert usually commences, in which the treble is sustained by crickets; gifted with lungs far exceeding in power those of the European hearth, while the bass is croaked forth by innumerable toads. The bugle horns of the musquitos are drowned in the dissonance, and the gurgling accompaniment of the musk rats is scarcely to be distinguished. In the midst of this uproar, should sleep, long-wooded, descend at last to rest upon the weary eyelids, it is but too often chased away by the yells of a wandering troop of jackalls, each animal apparently endeavouring to outshriek his neighbour. A quiet night in any part of India is exceedingly difficult of attainment; the natives, who sleep through the heat of the day, protract their vigils far beyond the midnight hour, and, however silent at other periods, are always noisy at night. Parties from adjacent villages patrol the roads, singing; and,

during religious festivals or bridal revelries, every sort of discordant instrument, gongs, and blaring trumpets six feet long, are brought in aid of the shouts of the populace.

Such is the usual character of a night in the jungles, and it requires nerves of no ordinary kind to support its various inflictions. Fortunately, the beds, as they are constructed and placed in India, afford a secure asylum from actual contact with invaders, the many-legged and many-winged host, which give so lively an idea of the plagues of Egypt. The couch occupies the centre of the floor, and is elevated to a considerable height from the ground; the mosquito-curtains, which are tightly tucked in all round, though formed of the thinnest and most transparent material, cannot easily be penetrated from without; and though bats may brush them with their wings, lizards innumerable crawl along the walls, and musk-rats skirt round the posts, admission to the interior is nearly impossible: on this account, as well as for the great preservative which they form against malaria, it is advisable to sleep under a mosquito-net at all seasons of the year.

The noisome broods nurtured in the desolate places round Etawah, have not yet been taught to

fly from the abode of the European; but to counterbalance the annoyance which their presence occasions, the brighter and more beautiful inhabitants of the jungles fearlessly approach the lonely bungalow. In no other part of India, with the exception of the hill-districts, are more brilliant and interesting specimens of birds and insects to be seen; extremely small brown doves, with pink breasts, appear amid every variety of the common colour, green pigeons, blue jays, crested wood-peckers, together with an infinite number of richly-plumed birds, glowing in purple, scarlet, and yellow, less familiar to unscientific persons, flock around. A naturalist would luxuriate in so ample a field for the pursuit of his studies, and need scarcely go farther than the gardens, to find those feathered wonders, which are still imperfectly described in works upon ornithology. Here the lovely little tailor-bird sews two leaves together, and swings in his odorous nest from the pendulous bough of some low shrub.

The fly-catcher, a very small and slender bird of a bright green, is also an inhabitant of the gardens, which are visited by miniature birds resembling those of paradise, white, and pale brown, with tails composed of two long feathers. Nothing can

be more beautiful than the effect produced by the brilliant colours of those birds, which congregate in large flocks; the ring-necked paroquets, in their evening flight, as the sun declines, shew rich masses of green; and the byahs, or crested-sparrows, whose breasts are of the brightest yellow, look like clouds of gold as they float along.

Numbers of aquatic birds feed upon the shores of the neighbouring Jumna, and the tremendous rush of their wings, as their mighty armies traverse the heavens, joined to other strange and savage sounds, give a painful assurance to those long accustomed to the quietude of sylvan life in England, that they are intruders on the haunts of wild animals, which have never been subjected to the dominion of man. There is one sound which, though not peculiar to the jungles, is more wearying than in more thickly-inhabited places, on account of the extreme loudness of the note, and its never ceasing for a single instant during the day,—the murmuring of doves: the trees are full of them, and my ear, at least, never became reconciled to their continued moaning. At sunset, this sound is hushed, but the brief interval of repose is soon broken by the night-cries already described.

The roads around Etawah, if such they may (by

courtesy) be called, are about the very worst in the world : they are the high-ways leading to the neighbouring stations, Mynpoorie, Futtighur, Agra, and Cawnpore, and afford no picturesque views within the range of a day's excursion. There is little temptation to drive out in a carriage in the evening, the favourite method of taking air and exercise in India; a few mango-groves, skirting villages surrounded by high walls of mud, probably as a security against the incursions of wild beasts, alone diversify the bare and arid plains, while the ruts threaten dislocation, and the dust, that plague of Hindostan, is nearly suffocating. The gardens afford a more agreeable method of passing the short period of day-light which the climate will permit to be spent in the open air. They are large and well planted; but the *mallees* (gardeners) are extremely ignorant of the European methods of cultivation, not having the same opportunity of acquiring knowledge as at larger stations. The pomegranate is of little value except for its rich red flowers; for the fruit—in consequence, no doubt, of either being badly grafted or not grafted at all—when ripe, is crude and bitter; it is greatly esteemed, however, by the natives, who cover the green fruit with clay, to prevent the depredations of

birds. The pomegranates brought from Persia never appeared to me to merit their celebrity : whether any attempt has been made to improve them, by a graft from the orange, I know not, but I always entertained a wish to make the experiment. Sweet lemons, limes, oranges, and citrons offer, in addition to their superb blossoms and delicious perfume, fruit of the finest quality; and grapes, which are trained in luxuriant arcades, not only give beauty to a somewhat formal plantation, but afford a grateful banquet at a period of the year (the hot winds) in which they are most acceptable.

Amongst the indigenous fruits of these jungles is a wild plum, which has found an entrance into the gardens, and which, if properly cultivated, would produce excellent fruit; in its present state, unfortunately, it is too resinous to be relished by unaccustomed palates. The melons, which grow to a large size, and are abundant in the season, are chiefly procured from native gardens, on the banks of the Jumna, as they flourish on the sands which border that river. Mangos and jacks occupy extensive plantations, exclusive of the gardens, and are left, as well as custard apples, plantains, and guavas, to the cultivation of the natives, the ground

in the neighbourhood of a bungalow being chiefly appropriated to foreign productions.

The seeds of European vegetables are sown after the rainy season, and come to perfection during the cold weather; green peas, cauliflowers, and cos lettuce appear at Christmas, sustaining, without injury, night-frosts which would kill them in their native climes. Either the cultivation is better understood, or the soil is more congenial to these delicate strangers, since they succeed better than the more hardy plants, celery, beet-root, and carrots, which never attain to their proper size, and are frequently deficient in flavour. To watch the progress of the winter-crop of familiar vegetables, and to inspect those less accurately known, cannot fail to be interesting, although the climate will not permit a more active part in the management of a garden.

The oleanders, common all over India, are the pride of the jungles, spreading into large shrubs, and giving out their delicate perfume from clusters of pink and white flowers. The *baubool* also boasts scent of the most exquisite nature, which it breathes from bells of gold; the delicacy of its aroma renders it highly prized by Europeans, who are overpowered by the strong perfume of the jessamine,

and other flowers much in request with the natives. The sensitive plant grows in great abundance in the gardens of Etawah, spreading itself over whole borders, and shewing on a grand scale the peculiar quality whence it derives its name: the touch of a single leaf will occasion those of a whole parterre to close and shrink away, nor will it recover its vigour until several hours after the trial of its sensibility. Equally curious, and less known, is the property of another beautiful inhabitant of these regions; the flowers of a tree of no mean growth arrive to nearly the size of a peony; these flowers blow in the morning, and appear of the purest white, gradually changing to every shade of red, until, as the evening advances, they become of a deep crimson, and falling off at night, are renewed in their bridal attire the following day. When gathered and placed in a vase, they exhibit the same metamorphosis, and it is the amusement of many hours to watch the progress of the first faint tinge, as it deepens into darker and darker hues.

Around every shrub, butterflies of various tints sport and flutter, each species choosing some particular blossoms, appearing as if the flowers themselves had taken flight, and were hovering over the

parent bough: one plant will be surmounted by a galaxy of blue-winged visitants, while the next is radiant with amber or scarlet. Immense winged grasshoppers, whose whole bodies are studded with emeralds which no jeweller can match; shining beetles, bedecked with amethysts and topazes; and others, which look like spots of crimson velvet, join the gay carnival. These lovely creatures disappear with the last sun-beams, and are succeeded by a less desirable race. Huge vampire-bats, measuring four feet from tip to tip of their leathern wings, wheel round in murky circles; owls venture abroad, and the odious musk rat issues from its hole.

The remaining twilight is usually spent upon the *chubootur*, a raised terrace or platform of chunam, generally commanding an extensive prospect. Chairs are placed for the accommodation of the females and their visitors, and the road beneath often presents a very lively scene. Native conveyances of all kinds, and some exceedingly grotesque, pass to and fro; fukeers are conveyed from the city to their residences in the neighbouring villages, in a sort of cage, not larger than a modern hat-box, in which the wonder is how they can contrive to bestow themselves; these miniature litters

are slung on a bamboo, and carried by two men; covered carts drawn by bullocks, camels, and buffaloes returning home, with occasionally an elephant stalking majestically along, are the most common passengers; but native travellers of rank, attended by numerous trains of well-armed dependants, wedding and religious processions, composed of fantastic groups, frequently attract the gazing eye, amusing by their novelty.

As night draws on, packs of jackalls may be dimly descried on the roads, looking like dark phantoms; and even while the bungalow is blazing with lights, the wolf may be seen prowling at a little distance, watching for some unguarded moment to snatch an infant from its mother's lap. Such catastrophes are not uncommon: frequently, while seated at tea, the party has been startled by the shouts of the servants, too late aware of the intruder's presence. Pursued by cries and the clattering of bamboos, the wretch is sometimes known to drop its prey; but in general he succeeds in carrying it off to some inaccessible spot. These occurrences take place just before nightfall, when the appearance of a wolf is not suspected, and if he should be seen he may be mistaken for a pariah dog. When the natives retire to their houses,

every aperture is secured by strong lattices, and none venture to sleep outside who are not capable of protecting themselves. Europeans do not seem to consider wolves as worthy game; when a tiger makes his appearance in the neighbourhood of a cantonment, all the residents, civil and military, are astir, and it seldom happens that he is suffered to escape the crusade which is formed against him; the more ignoble animal is left to the natives, who however, seldom claim the reward given by government of five rupees per head, in consequence of a superstition which prevails amongst them, that wherever a wolf's blood is spilled, the ground becomes barren: this notion is unfortunate, since they display both courage and conduct in the attack of fiercer beasts of prey. No sooner were the yells of two hyenas heard in the cantonments of Etawah, than a party of half-naked men, armed only with bamboos, went up to the lair which they had chosen, and after a severe struggle secured them alive. The victors bound their prizes to bamboos, and carried them round to each bungalow, where of course they received a reward in addition to that given by the judge.

The hyena of a menagerie affords a very faint idea of the savage of the jungles; these creatures,

though severely injured, retained, even in their manacled state, all their native ferocity, unsubdued by long fasting and blows. A gentleman present, anxious to exhibit his skill with the broad-sword, brandished a *tulwar*, with the intention of cutting off their heads: but he was disappointed; one of the expected victims snatched the weapon from his hand, and broke it in pieces in an instant; they were then less ostentatiously despatched.

It is unfortunate that beauty of prospect cannot be combined in India with the more essential conveniences necessary for the performance of military duties; while nothing can be more ugly than the tract marked out for the cantonments of Etawah, the ravines into which it is broken, at a short distance, leading to the Jumna, are exceedingly picturesque, affording many striking landscapes; the sandy winding steeps on either side are richly wooded with the *neem*, the *peepul*, and a species of the palm, a tree which in the Upper Provinces always stands singly, the soil being less congenial than lower grounds near the coast: in these situations, it is more beautiful than when it plants itself in whole groves. Sometimes an opening presents a wide view over wild jungle; at others, it gives glimpses of the Jumna, whose blue waters sparkle

in the beams of the rising or setting sun. These ravines can only be traversed upon horseback, or upon an elephant, and they must be visited by day-break to be seen to advantage.

However beautiful the awakening of nature may be in other parts of the world, its balmy delights can never be so highly appreciated as in the climes of the East, where its contrast to the subduing heat of burning noon, renders it a blessing of inestimable value. The freshness of the morning air, the play of light and shade, which is so agreeable to the eye, the brightness of the foliage, the vivid hue of the flowers opening their variegated clusters to the sun, rife with transient beauty, for evening finds them drooping; the joyous matins of the birds, and the playful gambols of wild animals emerging from their dewy lairs, exhilarate the spirits, and afford the highest gratification to the lover of sylvan scenes. Every tree is tenanted by numerous birds; superb falcons look out from their lofty eyries, and wild peacocks fling their magnificent trains over the lower boughs, ten or twelve being frequently perched upon the same tree. The smaller birds, sparrow-hawks, green pigeons, blue jays, &c. actually crowd the branches; the crow-pheasant whirrs as strange footsteps ap-

proach, and wings his way to deeper solitudes; while flocks of parroquets, upon the slightest disturbance, issue screaming from their woody coverts, and, spreading their emerald plumes, soar up until they melt into the golden sky above. At the early dawn, the panther and the hyena may be seen, sculking along to their dens; the antelope springs up, bounding across the path; the nylghau scours over bush and briar, seeking the distant plain; the porcupine retreats grunting, or stands at bay erecting his quills in wrath at the intrusion; and innumerable smaller animals—the beautiful little blue fox, the civet with its superb brush, and the nimble mongoose—make every nook and corner swarm with life. Gigantic herons stalk along the river's shores; the brahmanee ducks hover gabbling above, and huge alligators bask on the sand-banks, stretched in profound repose, or watching for their prey.

As the jungles recede from the dwellings of man, they become wilder and more savage; large *jheels* (ponds) spread their watery wastes over the low marshes, and are the haunt of millions of living creatures. Small hunting parties frequently encamp during the cold season on the banks of these glassy pools, where, in addition to every descrip-

tion of smaller game, the wild boar, though not so common as in Bengal, may be ridden down and speared by the expert sportsman. The native hunters (*shikarees*) go out at all periods of the year, and are frequently retained in European establishments for the purpose of ensuring regular supplies for the table.

The equipments of these men would astonish the hero of a hundred *battus*; they are armed with an old rusty clumsy matchlock, which they never fire except when certain of their quarry, making up in skill and patience for the inefficiency of their weapons. They go out alone, and never return empty-handed; and young men desirous of obtaining good sport, and of securing the shy and rare beasts of chase, prefer seeking their game attended by one of these men to joining larger parties, who are frequently disappointed of the nobler species, and are compelled to be contented with snippets.

The nylghau, when stall-fed, is more esteemed in India than it deserves, as the flesh resembles coarse beef, and when made into hams is apt to crumble; smaller venison, on the contrary, is not prized according to its merits, Europeans preferring the half-domesticated tenant of an English

park to the wild flavour of the dweller in the jungles.

There is the same prejudice against pea-chicks, which few are aware are considered a dainty at home (the grand criterion of Anglo-Indians), and they are neglected, though affording an excellent substitute for turkeys, which are dear and over-fed. This American importation does not thrive very well in India; so many die before they arrive at maturity, that the native breeders are obliged to put a high price upon the survivors, which are often sold for fifteen rupees each: they are generally encumbered with fat, and are in fact vastly inferior to young pea-fowl, which combine the flavour of the pheasant with the juiciness of the turkey. Guinea-fowl find a more congenial climate in India, and in many places run wild and breed in the woods. Common poultry also are found there in an untamed state; they go under the denomination of jungle-fowl, and are quite equal to any feathered game which is brought to table.

The river Jumna is well-stocked with fish, and during the rainy season numerous nullahs supply Etawah with many excellent sorts, including the finest, though not the largest, prawns to be had in India. The mutton and beef are of the best quality,

the former being usually an appendage to each resident's farm. Native butchers feed cattle and sheep for European consumption, taking care, however, not to kill the former until all the joints shall be bespoken. A family who entertain, will not find a whole bullock too much for their own use, slaughtered at Christmas; and the salting pieces reserved for the hot weather, when cured by experienced hands, will keep good for a whole year. The expedient in less favourable seasons to procure salt-beef, when fresh killed, is to boil it in strong brine, and serve it up the same day.

There is no regular supply of European articles at Etawah; the residents are not sufficiently numerous to encourage a native to traffic in beer, wine, brandy, cheese, &c.; these things, together with tea and coffee, several kind of spices, English pickles, and English sauces, must be procured from Cawnpore, a distance of ninety-six miles. A crash of glass or crockery cannot be repaired without recourse to the same emporium, excepting now and then, when an ambulatory magazine makes its appearance, or the *dandies* belonging to boats which have ascended the Ganges from Calcutta, hawk about small investments, which they have either stolen, or purchased for almost nothing at an auc-

tion. On these occasions, excellent bargains are procured; boxes of eau-de-cologne, containing six bottles, being sold for a rupee, and anchovy-paste, mushroom-ketchup, &c. at less than the retail price in England; the true value of Brandy or Hollands is better known, and these articles are seldom sold much below the current-price at Cawnpore. The female residents of Etawah must depend entirely upon their own stores, for they cannot purchase a single yard of ribbon, and are frequently in great distress for such trifling articles as pins, needles, and thread; shoes, gloves, everything in fact belonging to the wardrobe, must be procured from Cawnpore, the metropolis of the Upper Provinces.

In the cold season, strings of camels laden with the rich productions of Thibet and Persia pass on their way to Benares and Patna; some are freighted with costly merchandize,—shawls, carpets, and gems; others carry less precious articles,—apples, *kistmists* (raisins), dried apricots, pomegranates, grapes, and pistachio-nuts. Upon the necks of these camels, beautiful little Persian kittens are seen seated, the venders finding a ready sale for their live cargo both at European and native houses. These silken-haired bushy-tailed cats make the prettiest and the most useful pets of an Indian establishment; they

are capital mousers, and will attack snakes and the larger kind of lizards; a bungalow, tenanted by one of these long-furred specimens of the feline race and a terrier-dog, will soon be cleared of vermin. They are in great esteem all over the country, and will fetch from eight to fifty rupees, the latter price being offered at Calcutta, where they are not so easily procured as in the upper country. The common cat of Hindostan is exceedingly ugly when unmixed with foreign breeds; but there is a very pretty and curious variety in the Indian islands, with a sleek coat and a short flat tail, square at the end. The Persian merchants also bring very beautiful greyhounds to India for sale, but they are always extremely high-priced, being much in request; the native, or pariah dogs, are a degenerate and useless race of mongrels, and infinite care is taken to preserve foreign breeds, which require great attention, the climate being very unfavourable to all except the hardiest sort of terriers.

The unsheltered site of Etawah affords ample opportunity for the contemplation of the changes of the atmosphere; in no part of India do the hot winds blow with greater fury. This terrible visitation takes place in March, and continues during the

whole of April and May. The wind usually rises about eight o'clock in the morning, and if coming from the right point (the west), and strong enough to cause sufficient evaporation, the *tatties* are put up—thick mats, made of the roots of a fragrant grass (*cuscus*), upon bamboo-frames, fitting into the doors or windows; all the apertures in a contrary direction being closely shut. These *tatties* are kept constantly wet, by men employed to throw water upon them on the outside, and the wind which comes through them is changed into a rush of cold air, so cold sometimes as to oblige the party within to put on additional clothing. While the wind continues steady, the only inconveniences to be borne are the darkness—that second plague of Egypt, common to Indian houses—and the confinement; for those who venture abroad pay dearly for their temerity: the atmosphere of a gasometer in full operation might as easily be endured; exhaustion speedily follows, the breath and limbs fail, and if long exposed to the scorching air, the skin will peel off. Yet this is the period chosen by the natives for their journies and revelries; they cover their faces with a cloth, and with this simple precaution brave the fiercest blasts of the simoom. These winds usually subside at sunset, though they some-

times blow to a later hour, and are known to continue all night. If they should change to the eastward, the *tatties* are useless, producing only a hot damp steam. In this event, the only means of mitigating the heat is to exclude the wind by filling up the crevices, hanging thick curtains (*pardahs*) over the doors, and setting all the *punkahs* in motion : inefficient expedients, for, in despite of all, the atmosphere is scarcely bearable ; excessive and continual thirst, languor of the most painful nature, and irritability produced by the prickly heat, render existence almost insupportable. Every article of furniture is burning to the touch ; the hardest wood, if not well covered with blankets, will split with a report like that of a pistol, and linen taken from the drawers appears as if just removed from a kitchen fire. The nights are terrible ; every apartment being heated to excess, each may be compared to a large oven, in which M. Chaubert alone could repose at ease. Gentlemen usually have their beds placed in the verandahs, or on the *chubootur*, as they incur little risk in sleeping in the open air, at a season in which no dews fall, and there is scarcely any variation in the thermometer. Tornadoes are frequent during the hot winds ; while they last, the skies, though cloudless, are

darkened with dust, the sun is obscured, and a London fog cannot more effectually exclude the prospect. The birds are dreadful sufferers at this season ; their wings droop, and their bills are open as if gasping for breath ; all animals are more or less affected, and especially those which have been imported to the country. Our Persian cats were wont to coil themselves round the jars of water in the bathing-rooms, and to lie on the wet grass between the tatties, where they frequently received a sprinkling from the copious libations poured upon the frames without. If, tired of confinement, they ventured into the verandah, they would speedily return, looking quite aghast at the warm reception they had met with abroad.

The breaking-up of the hot winds affords a magnificent spectacle ; they depart in wrath, after a tremendous conflict with opposing elements. The approaching strife is made known by a cloud, or rather a wall of dust, which appears at the extremity of the horizon, becoming more lofty as it advances. The air is sultry and still, for the wind, which is tearing up the sand as it rushes along, is not felt in front of the billowy masses, whose mighty ramparts gather strength as they spread ; at length the plain is surrounded, and the sky

becomes as dark as midnight. Then the enchained thunder breaks forth; but its most awful peals are scarcely heard in the deep roar of the tempest; burst succeeds to burst, each more wild and furious than the former; the forked lightnings flash in vain, for the dust, which is as thick as snow, flings an impenetrable veil around them. The wind, having spent itself in a final effort, suddenly subsides, and the dust is as speedily dispersed by torrents of rain, which in a very short time flood the whole country. The *tatties* are immediately thrown down, and though they may have previously rendered shawls necessary, the relief experienced when breathing the fresh air of heaven, instead of that produced by artificial means, is indescribable. All the animal creation appear to be endued with fresh life and vigour, as they inhale the cooling breezes; the songs of the birds are heard again, and flocks and herds come forth rejoicing. Before the watery pools have penetrated into the parched earth, so rapid is the growth of vegetation, patches of green appear along the plain, and those who take up their posts in the verandah for an hour or two, may literally see the grass grow. In the course of a single day, the sandy hillocks will be covered with verdure,

and in a very short time the grass becomes high and rank. While the clouds are actually pouring out their liquid treasures, the rainy season is not unpleasant; *penkaha* may be dispensed with, and the venetians may be removed without danger of being blinded by the glare; but the intervals between the showers are excessively hot, and the frequent changes of the atmosphere, and the malaria arising from the surrounding marshes, render it dreadfully unhealthy. Fever and ague are the common complaints; the former is often fatal, and the utmost vigilance is requisite to avoid the danger to which both natives and Europeans are continually exposed, since infection is frequently brought from distant places by currents of air.

The effects of these partial tornadoes is very curious; they are almost seen to traverse the plain, their course resembling that of a swollen river or a lava-flood. Persons may occupy a position at a very short distance from the spot in which the tempest is raging without feeling the agitation of the elements, and behold at ease the devastation which they cause; trees are torn up by the roots, roofs are stripped of their tiles, and the choppers of out-houses fly off like gigantic birds, being carried several yards beyond the place where they

originally stood. I once witnessed a very amusing scene of this nature: the servants of a neighbour, anxious to preserve their master's property, on the roof of the cook-room taking wing, rushed out of their houses, and with great vigour and alacrity seized the ends of the flying bamboos ere they reached the ground, running along with their canopy until its impetus had ceased, and then restoring it to the deserted walls on which it had formerly rested.

The rains usually continue from the first or second week in June until the middle of October, and in some seasons are extremely violent; the desolation on the rivers' banks is frightful; whole villages are plunged into the flood, a catastrophe seldom attended by loss of life, as the natives usually have timely warning, and escape with their goods and chattels, taking care, however, like the Sicilians in the neighbourhood of *Ætna*, to build again in places equally exposed to inundation. Bungalows often sustain considerable damage during a very wet season; the pillars of the verandahs sink and lose their perpendicular, and out-offices and servants' houses are frequently washed away, leaving nothing but fragments of mud-walls behind. The thunder and lightning which accompany these cataracts are terrific, filling the heavens

with blue and crimson light, and carrying death into the plains, where herdsmen and shepherds frequently perish. The final fall is generally the heaviest, lasting three or four days, and bringing cold weather along with it. A sudden and grateful change of climate takes place upon the departure of the rains; the sun is deprived of its noxious power, and renders the heavens bright without being sultry; exercise may be taken on foot until ten o'clock in the day, in the Upper Provinces, and in a carriage at all times without inconvenience. While the weather is cloudy (generally during a few days in December), it is exceedingly practicable to walk out in the middle of the day in Etawah, and higher up, at Kurnaul, this gratification may be enjoyed for two months.

The climate all over India, even in Bengal, is delightful from October until March; all is brightness and beauty outside the house; summer gardens glow with myriads of flowers, native and exotic, while within, fires, especially in the evening, are acceptable, and blankets are necessary to ward off the inclemencies of the night. This is the gay season, and even Etawah loses part of its dulness, being visited by regiments on their march to and from other stations, who sometimes make it their

halting-place for a couple of days. A canvas city starts up, as if by magic, on the bare plain ; bullocks, camels, horses, and elephants are grouped amid the tents ; sheep, cows, goats, and poultry, following the fortunes of their owners, occupy temporary farm-yards in the rear ; and bazaars are opened for the sale of all the necessaries of life. At day-break, the striking of tent-pins, the neighing of horses, the lowing of herds, and the grunt of the camels, mixed with the long roll of the drums and bugle-calls, give warning that the march is about to commence ; and when the sun has risen, troops of hideous white vultures are seen feeding on the offal, where all the day before had been crowd and bustle.

CHAPTER VIII.

INDIAN SPORTS.

HAPPY are those young men who take out with them to India the tastes and habits of a scholar or of a sportsman, though perhaps neither can be carried to excess, without danger, in a climate almost equally hostile to mental and to bodily exertion. Moderation, either in study or in field-sports, requires more self-command than is usually practised by the young and enthusiastic; and the latter pursuit, especially, is so fascinating, as to beguile veterans into rash enterprizes, which could only be excusable in the days of boyhood. Formerly almost all the European residents of India were mighty hunters; but, in the present day, though there are quite enough to keep up their ancient reputation, the slaughter of wild animals is not so general, or so absorbing a passion as it used to be, when the Company's territories were surrounded by the courts of native princes, who were accustomed to take the field against the furred and feathered rangers of the

forest, with all the pomp and circumstance of war. Parties of gentlemen from Calcutta are in the habit of spending a part of the cold season amid the wildest jungles of Bengal ; but their *cortège*, though exceedingly numerous, and the havoc they make, though sufficiently great to satisfy any reasonable person, are nothing compared to the displays of former times. The amusements of Cossim Ally Khan, the nawab of Bengal, in 1761, afford a strong contrast to the habits and pursuits of his degenerate representatives. The fame of his exploits still survives in the memory of the people, and their scenes are pointed out with no small degree of exultation.

In one of his grand hunting-parties, his retinue, including a body-guard of cavalry, consisted of not fewer than twenty thousand persons. The officers of his army and household, and his European guests, were conveyed to the theatre of action on elephants, camels, and horses, or in palanquins. The hunters were armed with spears, bows, arrows, and matchlocks, and they were accompanied by greyhounds, hawks, and cheetahs. The scene of the chase was one of the most beautiful which the splendid landscapes of Bengal can present. Between the Ganges and one of the ranges of hills,

which spread themselves along the frontiers of the province, there is a wide tract of country, diversified with rocks, woods, lakes, heaths, and rivulets, and abounding with every sort of game ; hither the nawab and his party repaired, and, forming an extensive line, roused up the denizens of the field as they advanced, and letting the hawks fly as the wild-fowl sprang up, and loosening the greyhounds and cheetahs upon the deer ; the spear and matchlock-men attacked the wild hogs ; while others, mounted upon elephants, marked out the still more ferocious animals, and brought them down with a two-ounce ball. The nawab was one of the most active of the party ; sometimes he rode in an open palanquin, carried on the shoulders of eight bearers, with his shield, sword, gun, bow and quiver, lying beside him ; sometimes he mounted on horseback, and at others, where the grass and bushes were high, he got upon an elephant. After the diversion had been carried on for three or four hours and to the distance of twelve miles, the nawab and his guests repaired to their encampment, where a sumptuous repast was served up for their entertainment.

Hunting-parties, upon so grand a scale, are now rare in India, even amongst native princes ; and

though the imagination can scarcely fail to be dazzled by an assemblage of twenty thousand men, with their picturesque accompaniments of stud and equipage, scouring through the woods, and across the plains, in search of the noblest species of game, such scenes of barbaric splendour would soon become exceedingly tiresome. The truest enjoyment of field-sports is offered to small parties of Europeans, who blend intellectual tastes with the love of the chase; who, while sojourning in the forest, delight to make themselves acquainted with the manners and habits of its wild tribes, and who, not entirely bent upon butchery, vary their occupations by devoting themselves to botanical or geological pursuits.

The period usually chosen for these excursions is from the beginning of November until the end of February, a season in which the climate of Hindostan is delightfully temperate, the air perfectly serene, and the sky often without a cloud. Some verdant spot, shaded by adjacent groves, and watered by a small lake or rivulet, is selected for the encampment. An Indian jungle offers so great a variety of beauties, that there is no difficulty in the selection of an appropriate scene. A natural lawn, sloping down to a broad expanse of water,

shaded by palm-trees, whose graceful, tufted foliage forms so striking a feature in Oriental scenery, or beneath the canopy of the cathedral-like banian, stretching its long aisles in verdant pomp along the plain, or in the neighbourhood of a mosque, pagoda, or stately tomb, whose numerous recesses and apartments offer excellent accommodation for such followers of the party as are not provided with other shelter. There is no danger of being in want of any of the comforts and conveniences of life, during a sojourn in wildernesses, perchance as yet untrodden by the foot of man, or so long deserted as to leave no traces of human occupation. Wherever a party of this kind establishes itself, it will be followed by native shopkeepers, who make themselves very comfortable in a bivouac beneath the trees, and supply the encampment with every necessary which the servants and cattle may require. European stores are, of course, laid in by the *khansamahs* of the different gentlemen, and unless the sportsmen and their fair companions,—for ladies delight in such expeditions,—determine upon living entirely upon game, sheep and poultry are brought to stock a farm-yard, rendered impervious to the attacks of savage beasts. Every part of the surrounding country swarms with animal life; in the

Upper Provinces, insects are not very troublesome during the cold weather, nor are reptiles so much upon the alert; in Bengal, however, the cold is never sufficiently severe to paralyze the mosquitoes, which are said then to sting more sharply, and to cherish a more insatiate appetite than during the sultry part of the year. The inconveniences arising from too intimate a connection with lizards, spiders, and even less welcome guests, are more than counterbalanced by the gratification which inquisitive minds derive from the various novelties which present themselves upon every side. The majestic appearance of the trees, many of them covered with large lustrous flowers, or garlanded with creepers, which attain to an enormous size, must delight all who possess a taste for sylvan scenery. In some of the jungles of India, the giant parasites of the soil appear, as they stretch themselves from tree to tree, like immense boa-constrictors, and the blossoms they put forth, at intervals, are so large, and cluster so thickly together, as to suggest the idea of baskets of flowers hanging from a festoon: the underwood is frequently formed of richly-flowering plants; the *corinda*, which is fragrant even to satiety, and scarcely bearable in any confined place, loading the air with perfume; while the *dhag*, with

its fine, wide, dark-green leaf, and splendid crimson vase-like flowers, contrasts beautifully with other forest-trees, bearing white blossoms, smaller but resembling those of the *camellia japonica*.

So magnificent a solitude would in itself afford a very great degree of pleasure and interest to contemplative minds; but both are heightened by the living objects which give animation to the scene. Though wild hogs are most abundant in plantations of sugar-cane, which is their favourite food, and which imparts to their flesh the delicious flavour so highly esteemed by epicures, they are also to be found in the wildest and most uncultivated tracts. The roebuck, musk and hog-deer, conceal themselves amidst the thickest heath and herbage, and the antelopes and large deer rove over the plains. All these animals, however, seek the thickets occasionally, and they are fond of resorting to the tall coarse grass, which attains to the rankest luxuriance in the levels of the jungle, and is the favourite lair of the tiger and the hyæna. Panthers, leopards, bears, and the beautiful tiger-cat, are likewise inhabitants of these hiding-place; and in the neighbourhood of Rajmhal, the Deyra Dhoon, the Terraie, &c., rhinoceroses and wild buffaloes are added to the list. Amid the smaller and more

harmless creatures which haunt the jungle, one of the prettiest and most interesting is the fox ; its size scarcely exceeds that of an English hare ; the limbs are slender, and it is delicately furred with soft hair, generally of a bluish grey. It has not the offensive smell of the reynard of Europe, its food being principally grain, vegetables, and fruit. The passion of the fox for grapes was by no means a flight of fancy on the part of our old friend *Æsop*, who shewed himself well acquainted with the habits of the Asiatic species. They burrow in holes, and prefer the side of a hillock, where the grass is short and smooth, to the wood ; and there they may be seen in the morning and after sunset, frisking about and playing with their young. They afford excellent sport when hunted ; for, though not strong or persevering, they are fleet and flexible, and make many efforts (by winding in successive evolutions) to escape their pursuers. Jackals are almost as common as crows, in every part of India ; but notwithstanding their numbers, and the great desire which they evince to make themselves heard, there is some difficulty in getting a sight of them, except when the moon is up, and then they seek concealment in the shadows, gliding along under covert, with a stealthy movement, like some dark

phantom, or when the prospect of a banquet upon some newly-slain victim lures them from their retreat in open day.

However bare and solitary the place may be, the instant any animal falls to the ground, exhausted by wounds or disease, it is immediately surrounded by troops of two-legged and four-footed cormorants, which do not await its last gasp to commence their attack: four or five hundred vultures will be assembled, in an incredibly short period of time, in places where they are not usually to be found, whenever a bullock or deer has fallen a sacrifice to a tiger. Upon these occasions, if the rightful master of the feast should be in the neighbourhood, and choosing, as often is the case, to delay his meal until sunset, the jackals and the vultures, cowering close to the spot, await with great patience the moment in which they may commence their operations without giving offence, taking care to remove to a respectful distance, when the tiger, who is said to approach the dead carcass in the same cautious and crouching manner as when endeavouring to steal upon living prey, makes his appearance upon the scene.

It is affirmed that, wherever tigers roam or couch, multitudes of birds collect and hover about them,

screaming and crying, as if to create an alarm; and it is also said that peacocks are particularly allured by the tawny monarch of the wood, and that, when he is perceived by a flock, they will advance towards him immediately, and begin, with their usual ostentatious pomp, to strut around him, their wings fluttering, their feathers quivering, and their tails bristly and expanded*. Native sportsmen, who always prefer stratagem to open war, take advantage of this predilection, and painting a brown cloth screen, about six feet square, with black spots or streaks, advance under its cover, which is placed fronting the sun. The pea-fowl either approaches the lure, or suffers the fowlers, who are concealed behind it, to draw near enough to their mark to be quite certain of not missing it. A hole in the canvas enables them to take an accurate aim, and the *ruse* is always successful.

Strange instances of the fascination of animals are recorded, by which it would appear, that, under its influence, the most active and timid rush into the danger which we should suppose they would be most anxious to avoid. The power which serpents possess over birds, squirrels, &c., is well

* Some writers aver that the Indian peacocks never spread their tails.

known; and those who have visited unfrequented places have had opportunities of witnessing the effect of novel sights upon the shyest denizens of the waste.

When the line of march of large bodies of troops has led across sequestered plains, they have attracted the attention of herds of deer grazing in the neighbourhood. When startled by the humming murmuring noise made by the soldiers in passing, they have stood for some time staring, and apparently aghast with astonishment, with their eyes fixed upon the progressive files, whose glaring red uniforms and glittering muskets might well inspire them with fear. At length, in his bewilderment, the leading stag, striking the ground, tossing his antlers, and snorting loudly, has rushed forward across the ranks, followed by the whole herd, to the utter dismay and confusion of the soldiers, the frightened deer bounding over the heads of those files who were taken too much by surprise to halt, and make way for them. Incidents of a similar nature have occurred more than once, and they serve to give interest and variety to a march across some of those apparently boundless plains, which stretch to the horizon on every side, and are not of unfrequent occurrence in the thinly-peopled districts of Hindostan.

The birds, in many places, are to be seen literally in myriads; water-fowl especially congregate in the greatest abundance and variety; their numbers almost covering the lakes and *jheels*, when resting upon the water; and forming thick clouds, when, upon any alarm, they rise simultaneously upon the wing. The margin of the stream is surrounded by storks and cranes. The species of both are numerous, and the gracefulness of the shape of many can only be exceeded by the beauty of their plumage. The crested heron, whose snow-white tuft is an emblem of sovereignty in India, and the only feather which the religious prejudices of the Rajpoot princes permit them to wear, is one of the loveliest creatures imaginable; its eyes are of bright scarlet, and amidst many competitors in beauty, it shines conspicuous.

There are no pheasants in the woods of Bengal or Behar; but they are found upon the confines of Assam, Chittagong, and the ranges of the Himalaya. In Nepaul, and particularly about the Morung, they are large and beautiful, more especially the golden, the burnished, the spotted, and the azure, together with the brown argus-eyed pheasant. There are several varieties of pea-fowl, black, white, and grey, in addition to the common sort;

and though there are some districts in India, styled *par* distinction, *More-bunje*, "the place of peacocks," they are so common all over the country, that it would be almost difficult to find a woodland haunt where they do not abound. They are certainly not prized in India according to their merits, either as an ornamental appendage, or as an addition to the board. Some Europeans have only been reconciled to their admission at table, by an account which has reached them of their appearance at the Lord Mayor's state-dinners in London: Anglo-Indians, generally speaking, being exceedingly unwilling to judge for themselves where their gastronomic taste can be called in question. Nevertheless, those who, where native productions are worthy of praise, entertain no absurd prejudices in favour of exotics, are glad to have an opportunity of repeating the justly-merited claims to distinction of the pea-chick, as an article of provender.

High as are the merits of this fowl, however, in its happy combination of the game-flavour of the pheasant with the juiciness of the turkey, it must hide its diminished head before the glories of the florikin; the flanderkin of feudal banquets, and the peacock's early rival at the baronial feasts of

the Montacutes and the Courtenayes. The florikin is nearly, if not quite, as large as a turkey, and the plumage on the back is not unlike that which distinguishes the monarch of our poultry-yard: but the cock is furnished with a much more splendid crest. A tuft of fine black velvet feathers, which usually lies smooth upon the back of the head, can be erected at pleasure, and, when spread out, adds greatly to the noble appearance of the bird. Its favourite harbour is in the natural pastures which edge the extremities of swamps, and the borders of lakes, always in the neighbourhood of marshy ground, but not far distant from the uplands. In consequence of this choice of situation, and the variety of food which it presents, its flesh acquires a peculiarity unknown to other birds; the legs, which are white, resemble in flavour those of a pheasant, while the breast and the wings bear a similarity to the wild-duck: epicures pronounce the whole to be delicate, savoury, and juicy beyond all comparison. This fine bird is not sufficiently common in India to pall upon the appetite; it is found in Bengal and in the neighbourhood of the hill-districts; but, in many parts of the Upper Provinces, it will be searched for in vain.

The woodcock is not an inhabitant of southern

Asia, but snipes are exceedingly abundant; and there is one variety, the painted snipe, which attains a very large size, and which compensates for the absence of the former-mentioned bird.

The jungle-fowl performs the same duty for the pheasants, where they are not to be found; and in some places the speckled poultry of Guinea, which have wandered into the woods, and bred there, are discovered in a wild state. It is one of the most agreeable, amid the numerous enjoyments of forest scenery, to see the hens and chickens sculking and scudding between the bushes, and to hear the crowing of the jungle cock. The black and the rock partridge form very acceptable adjuncts to the table, whilst every variety of pigeons may be had for the trouble of killing them.

A camp-dinner for a hunting party is not only an exhilarating, but a very interesting meal. The most elaborate *pic-nic* provided for a *fête champêtre* in England, where people are put to all sorts of inconveniences, and must content themselves with a cold collation, is nothing to the luxurious displays of cookery performed in the open air in India. Under the shelter of some brushwood, the spits turn merrily and rapidly over charcoal fires; an oven is constructed for the baking-department, and

all the beneficial effect of hot hearths, for stews and other savoury compounds, are produced with the greatest ease and facility. All that can be attainable within the range of fifty or sixty miles, is brought into the camp upon the heads of *coolies*, glad to earn a few *pice* for their daily bread, and indifferent to the obstructions which may beset their path. The multitude of followers, attendant even upon a small encampment, precludes the possibility of any dreary or desolate feeling; the habits of the people are in unison with the scene; they are quite as happy under the umbrageous and odoriferous canopy of a *tope*, as they would be in the marble chambers of a palace. A gipsy-life appears to afford them the truest enjoyment; and the scattered groups, which they afford in the glades and openings of the forest, their blazing fires, cheerful songs, and the majestic and picturesque forms of the elephants and camels glancing between the trees, make up a panorama, which the eye of taste can scarcely tire of contemplating, and which, once seen, can never be forgotten.

Living in a jungle-encampment presents the best opportunity of becoming acquainted with the habits and manners of the elephant, which its domestication can permit. The *mahouts* live in the most

intimate association with the huge animals entrusted to their care; they have each an assistant *coolly*, part of whose business it is to prepare and bake the cakes for the evening meal. A fourth of the number he appropriates to himself, after going through the ceremony of asking the elephant's leave, a piece of etiquette performed in dumb-show, and which the sagacious animal seems perfectly to comprehend. The *coolly* feeds his companion, standing under the trunk, and putting each morsel into his mouth; an act of supererogation, but one in which native courtesy, or as it may be called officious zeal, delights, men as well as elephants being obliged to submit to more attendance than they require.

The *khidmutgars* who wait at table, will stir the tea for their masters, and would cut the meat upon their plates, if permitted to shew their diligence by such minute attentions. Though the gift of speech is denied to the elephant, he not only appears to understand all that is said to him by those with whom he is intimately acquainted, but also to possess the power of making his own sentiments and opinions known. He can be incited to extraordinary attempts by praises and by promises; and when sweetmeats, of which he is inordinately

fond, are held out to him, as the reward of successful exertion, he cannot be disappointed of the expected treat without danger.

The *mahouts* converse with their charges as if they were rational beings; perhaps the difference in intellectual acquirements is not very great between them, and where a strong friendship has been contracted, the elephant will refuse to admit of a successor in the office. Upon the dismissal of his keeper, an elephant, which had always been exceedingly gentle and tractable, suddenly changed its character and became unmanageable. Vain were all the efforts made to soothe and reconcile it to its new associates. After the struggle of several weeks, the attempt was given up; and the discharged servant being again re-established in his office, the elephant re-assumed its former demeanour, and returned quietly to its duty.

Elephants, though sometimes tempted to fly the abodes of man, and roam in freedom through the wilderness, never forget those persons to whom they have been attached during their state of servitude. One, which had rejoined a wild herd, when encountered by a hunting party, which was accompanied by the *mahout* who had formerly had the charge of him, suffered the man to mount upon his

neck, and, notwithstanding the experience he had gained of the sweets of liberty, returned at once to all his old habits. They are subject, however, at least a few, whose tempers are not particularly good, to fits of caprice and ferocity. It is astonishing with what ease and dexterity they can hook in, with that unwieldy-looking limb, the hind-leg, any object with which it comes in contact. Upon some slight provocation, an elephant has been known to ensnare the unfortunate *coolie* in attendance in this manner, and it is an expedient which is resorted to with infinite effect upon the attack of a tiger in the rear: the beast is speedily kicked to death, when once he is drawn within the range of those enormous feet.

The courage of the elephant is also liable to ebbs and flows: sometimes, at the sight of danger, especially on the sudden appearance of a tiger, he will take to flight, rushing wildly through the woods, and endangering the safety of the hunters on his back, by the violent collision of the howdah against the branches of the trees; at other times, he will run into the contrary extreme, and charge upon the tawny brute, by falling on his knees, and endeavouring to pin the tiger down with his tusks. This operation, which renders the howdah a very

untenable position, is often followed by another of a still more hazardous nature; the elephant is apt to roll over upon its side, in order to crush the foe by its weight, and in this event the sportsman has a good chance of being thrown into the clutches of the tiger, while all the guns go overboard as a matter of course. The courage of an elephant should be of a passive nature; and those whose good qualities have been improved by training, stand firm as a rock, sustaining the first burst of a tiger, uproused from his repose, with imperturbable coolness.

When an elephant has exhibited repeated proofs of cowardice, its dastardly conduct is punished by the degradation of being reduced from the honour of conveying the castle on its back, to the burthen of the baggage. It is not insensible to this disgrace, nor will a caparisoned elephant deign to associate with its brethren of the pad. No animal is better acquainted with its claims to distinction, or prouder of the splendour of its array; and the difference of the bearing between those decked in flowing jhools, richly bordered with gold, and bearing the silver howdah, or canopied ambarry on their backs, and the humble beast of burthen, whose housings are of the meanest description, and

whose load confers neither honour nor dignity, is very striking.

The care which elephants take of their trunks, in an encounter with wild beasts, shews how conscious they are of the value of that important instrument; sometimes they will erect it over their heads like a horn, and at others pack it into the smallest possible compass.

The elephant's partiality for sweetmeats has been already noticed; it is acquired in plantations of sugar-cane, and is universal. A curious instance of this attachment to confectionary, and the method pursued to gratify it by an elephant in its savage state, is upon record. It chanced that a *cooly*, laden with jaggery, a coarse preparation of sugar, was surprised in a narrow pass, in the kingdom of Candy, by a wild elephant. The poor fellow, intent upon saving his life, threw down the burthen, which the elephant devoured, and being well pleased with the repast, determined not to allow any person egress or regress who did not provide him with a similar banquet. The pass occurred upon one of the principal thoroughfares to the capital, and the elephant, taking up a formidable position at the entrance, obliged every passenger to pay tribute. It soon became generally

known that a donation of jaggery would ensure safe conduct through the guarded portal, and no one presumed to attempt the passage without the expected offering.

The elephant is fond of petting and protecting some inferior animal; it often takes a fancy to a little dog, and the latter, speedily becoming acquainted with the value of such a friend and ally, indulges himself in all sorts of impertinences. His post, a very secure one, under the shelter of the elephant's body, enables him to attack and annoy anything that happens to come in his way; he rushes out to the assault, and when likely to get the worst in the encounter, flies back to his place of refuge, and barks defiance at his adversaries. Sometimes the *sarus*, a tall bird of the crane species, which is often domesticated in an Indian compound, is taken into favour; but instances of similar friendship, between animals of very different habits and species, are not at all uncommon. A terrier-dog, a Persian cat, and an antelope, brought up together in the family of an officer, who was accustomed to divide his caresses amongst them, lived with each other in the greatest harmony and affection. During his residence in Calcutta, he was in the habit of spending the whole morning

abroad, and of returning about sun-set to dress. His four-footed favourites were acquainted with the hour in which they might expect to see him, and the trio always came in a body to meet and give him welcome: the cat cared nothing about change of place, being perfectly satisfied to accompany her master in all his travels, and feeling quite at home wherever he and the dog were to be found.

A party of Europeans, encamping in a jungle, will speedily discover their powers of attraction by the number of carrion-birds drawn to the spot by the scent of the slaughter in their farm-yard. The acuteness of the smell of these creatures has already been remarked; at the most extraordinary distance, they seem to be perfectly acquainted with every matter which can interest them, and solitary bungalows, where, on ordinary occasions, the kites and crows are allowed to collect the offal unmolested, will be certain of a visit from vultures, whenever anything worthy of attention is to be had.

The *argeelah*, or butcher-bird, though sometimes inhabiting solitary places, prefers a large cantonment to the jungle; they are always to be seen where European soldiers are quartered, but

scarcely think it worth their while to visit small stations garrisoned by native troops, the few English officers in command not killing enough provision to satisfy their inordinate appetites. Their nests are, however, almost invariably found in remote and thinly-peopled tracts; the country retirement, at the breeding-season, for the fashionable visitants of the metropolis of Bengal, being the neighbourhood of Commercolly. It is not generally known, that the marabout feathers, by some supposed to be the tribute of the paddy-goose, are in fact furnished by this disgusting-looking animal, whose coarse ragged attire gives no promise of the delicate beauty of the plumes so much in esteem in France and England. They grow in a tuft under the tail, and are not visible except upon close inspection. The men who get their bread by the sale of these feathers, conceal the fact as much as possible, under the idea that it would deteriorate their value. As the *argeelah* is protected by law in Calcutta, the people who collect the plumes, visit the place of their retirement for the purpose, and give its name to their merchandize, which is sold under the appellation of Commercolly feathers. The tuft is easily extracted, and it sometimes happens that, when an adjutant, as the bird is com-

monly called, is caught upon some high terrace or roof-top, where the depredation cannot come under the surveillance of the authorities, he is robbed of the valuable appendage: it is only necessary to catch him by the feathers under the tail; the first struggle to be free, leaves them in the hand of the marauder. Excepting the heron's, there are no other Indian plumes so highly prized, and, as an article of commerce, the marabouts' are the most important.

In enumerating the amusements afforded by a jungle, that supplied by the monkeys must not be omitted. In topes where particular tribes have taken up their quarters, they are innumerable, and upon the least alarm keep up an incessant discord and chatter amidst the branches. The frolics and gambols of these animals, when viewed at a distance, are highly diverting; but it is by no means desirable to come into close contact with a troop, their fierceness being quite equal to their cunning; they have been known to attack a single huntsman, and so far get the better of him as to deprive him of his gun. Young men can scarcely withstand the temptation of having a pop at them, either to scare them from some act of depredation, or out of mere wantonness, and they are not slow to perceive

the cause of their alarm: after the first consternation, occasioned by the report of a fowling-piece, has subsided, they are apt to resent it upon the person of the offender. They will shake the boughs over his head, grin, and chatter through them, and a few of the most daring will beset the path; and, with some hundreds to back them, in the event of an assault, the battle is best avoided, since its issue would be rather doubtful. The extraordinary veneration with which the monkeys are regarded by the Hindoo natives of India, prevents the extirpation, which their exploits amongst the corn and other plantations seems to render necessary, as a measure of precaution. Monkeys, it is said, are not bad eating, and there appears to be a sufficient number to supply the bazaars of a district during a scarcity of grain.

There is no part of the world, perhaps, which produces game in greater plenty or diversity than Bengal. Besides fifteen species of deer, including the antelope, the roe-buck, the red-deer, the small moose-deer, the hog or bristled-deer, and the musk-deer, there are wild-hogs, hares, several kinds of common partridge; quails, which at a particular season have been compared to flying pats of butter; peacocks, ortolans, and black-partridge; wild-geese,

wild-ducks, teal, widgeon, water-hens, cranes, storks, and snipes of sundry shapes, colours, and sizes; the florikin, before-mentioned, though not in such abundance as the others, and the jungle-fowl. A great variety of fish is also supplied from the lakes, jheels, tanks, and nullahs: the latter are caught in large quantities, either with nets, or by a still more simple contrivance, that of placing large bundles of rushy bushes in the water over-night. Water-fowl are caught in Hindostan by people, who either wade or swim into the lakes with an earthen pot over their heads, or the artificial representation of a duck, made to fit on like a cap. Thus disguised, they are enabled to get so close to the objects of their pursuit as to pull them by their feet under water, and to deposit them in their game-bag: the manœuvre is effected by expert persons with very little disturbance to other flocks upon the lake, and so easily as to allow them to sell the produce of their day's sport at a very low price.

CHAPTER IX.

THE JUNGLES.

THE term jungle is very ill-understood by European readers, who generally associate it with uninhabited forests and almost impenetrable thickets; whereas all the desert and uncultivated parts of India, whether covered with wood or merely suffered to run waste, are styled jungles; and *jungle-wallah* is a term indiscriminately applied to a wild cat or to a gentleman who has been quartered for a considerable period in some desolate part of the country. Persons who are attached to very small stations in remote places, or who reside in solitary houses surrounded only by the habitations of the natives are said to be living in the jungles.

For a short period, a sojourn amidst the untamed wildernesses of Hindostan is very desirable, and with the exception of the fixed inhabitants of Calcutta, all persons visiting India must have had more or less experience of the delights of savage life in their passage through those unreclaimed tracts which continually occur during a

long march. But though, perhaps, as much as may appear to be desirable may be seen in a journey of two or three months, it is necessary to occupy the same spot for a considerable length of time, in order thoroughly to understand the ways and modes of spending the day in the solitary districts of a foreign country ; for, in constant movements through wilds, however monotonous, the incidents of the march and the change of scene afford a salutary relief to ennui, which is not to be found in a fixed residence. If our fellow-sojourners in the wilds do not happen to be congenial spirits, if the boar of the neighbouring *cate* (plantation) happen to be as agreeable a companion as the *bore* of the adjacent bungalow, the misnamed *society* of the place becomes an additional grievance.

There are perverse persons in the world who refuse to accommodate themselves to the circumstances in which they may be placed, and who, by carrying the formalities and observances of large communities into the jungles, effectually prevent the easy sociability which can alone render constant intercourse desirable. Where the circle is extremely circumscribed, the evil is without remedy ; the efforts of one individual, or even of one family, must be unavailing, and the minority are con-

demned to lead the most irksome life imaginable, thrown entirely upon their own resources, and those resources miserably contracted by the peculiarities of the climate, and the difficulty of procuring the materials necessary to carry on any little ingenious art by which they may hope to beguile the time. To descend to particulars, we may imagine a small station (there are many such in India, though it would be invidious to name them), in which the number of Europeans does not amount to more than a dozen individuals ; this station, at least a hundred miles from the head-quarters of the district, and the inhabitants depending entirely upon each other for society, with the exception of any chance traveller who may happen to pass through. Where the persons thus congregated together are of cheerful, obliging dispositions, ready to fall into any rational plan for the benefit and advantage of the whole, a residence in the jungles of India may be rendered exceedingly delightful ; and those who have enjoyed its freedom from worldly cares and worldly vanities, its quiet sober existence, will look back upon it as the most enviable portion of their lives. Conversation will supply the place of books, and the few books which the station may boast will furnish topics for conversation, if those who are

fond of reading can be induced to enter into discussions upon what they read. When this is the case, the value of a book is enhanced to a degree scarcely conceivable to those who can command a well-furnished library at home: the commentaries elicited may not be very profound, but, if lively and entertaining, they form admirable substitutes for the *Edinburgh* and *Quarterly*, and where anything like talent is brought into play, the absence of many of those prejudices, which can scarcely fail to bias opinions concerning new works in the places of their production, renders decisions formed in the jungles of India more just and impartial than those which are so peremptorily pronounced by the leading reviews of the day.

The bachelors of a station usually bestow all their tediousness upon each other, and unless one should be more studious than the rest, whether their tempers and habits should assimilate or not, will be constantly together, frequently taking no sort of pleasure in that daily intercourse which they cannot live without. With the ladies it is different; they will not be at the trouble of leaving their houses except upon formal invitations, unless inclination should lead them into society; in this event neither rains nor hot winds can prevent them from traversing

the short distances which divide the bungalows from each other ; and when kindness of heart or mutual tastes bring them into constant association, the gentlemen follow in their train, very few preferring the jovialities of their own exclusive circle to the attractiveness of a feminine coterie. The fruits of domestication amid the ladies, where the harmony is not interrupted by any mal-accident, are of incalculable value ; so much, indeed, depends upon the wives and sisters of the residents, that there ought to be an Act of Parliament to prohibit the exportation of any lady, who is not qualified to lighten the dreariness of an Indian jungle.

It has been before remarked, that there is little scope for feminine industry in our eastern possessions. Charity bazaars, which put so many fair fingers into motion in Europe, are almost unknown out of Calcutta. Where there is no theatre, no fancy ball in perspective, requiring dresses and decorations to be fashioned out of such materials as only a bold and imaginative spirit would consider applicable, invention flags ; people like to fancy that they are manufacturing something useful, and though nothing in India is unprofitable which affords employment for the fingers, preventing the miserable tedium resulting from utter inactivity of

body and mind, encouragement is necessary to induce perseverance; and it must be confessed that the gathering together of ladies, in the days of tapestry-hangings or of eleven-sided pincushions, has always tended to the production of a thousand stitches where one would suffice. The climate in India is unfortunately adverse to needle-work, or any work whose beauty may be endangered by hands which cannot be kept at a proper temperature: thread-netting, taking the precaution to use silver implements, is the employment best adapted to the hot weather, but the fair proportions of many a scarf have been curtailed by the want of a few reels of cotton. The natives twist all the thread they use as they need it from the raw material, division of labour being very ill-understood in Hindostan,—in consequence perhaps of the dearth of political economists,—and Calcutta does not always afford a supply of the precise article wanted to complete some delicate manufacture, which will not admit of any inferior substitute. European shopkeepers vary their prices so considerably, according to the demand, that prudent persons will not indulge in the purchase of goods charged so much beyond their value. The ladies at a jungle station were disappointed of a supply of glazed cotton, in con-

sequence of the enormous price put upon the stock which only one milliner in Calcutta happened to have on hand; six rupees (twelve shillings) per ounce was asked for what in England sold for half the number of pence; and the gentleman employed to execute the commission, struck with the magnitude of the sum, requested fresh instructions from his fair correspondents, who laid their work aside in despair. Thus, it appears that there are many temptations to idleness and few incitements to industry; and in nine cases out of ten, where the ladies of a station only meet upon ceremonious occasions, all the work, both useful and ornamental, will devolve upon the native tailor employed in the household.

It is difficult to say how the females of Anglo-Indian families, who are only visible upon great occasions, pass away their time. At large stations, it may be supposed that they are really not at home when such an announcement is made to the visitor; but in the jungles, where every movement must be known at the neighbouring bungalows, there is something mysterious in the seclusion of the lady of the house, and it is to be feared that she does not think her neighbours worthy the trouble of making herself visible: her dressing room forms an

impenetrabilia which is only to be guessed at: if country-born, or transplanted at a very early age, she perhaps finds more amusement in conversation with her native attendants than in that of Europeans of a higher grade of intellect. There are generally a few ladies at every European station addicted to this mode of thinking and acting; but in a large society their habits are of little consequence; it is only when a malign star condemns the members of some family, whose mental acquirements are of a superior order, to drag out two or three years of their existence in a jungle where there can be no reciprocity of sentiment between them and the inhabitants of the neighbouring houses, that the indulgence of idle and debasing habits can be felt as a grievance. But this is a conjunction which too frequently occurs, and, though quarrelling and ill-will may be avoided, the intercourse which takes place is constrained and heartless.

The observation of the same hours is absolutely essential to the comfort and sociability of a small station, and where the majority of the inhabitants persist in dining at night, as it is called, it is impossible to establish a free and friendly intercourse. In the first place, this custom involves the neces-

sity of entertaining dinner company, or not receiving any company at all. You cannot dismiss your guests before dinner, and there is no time to see them afterwards. In these days of reduction and retrenchment, there are not many of the servants of the Company who can afford to give frequent invitations to dinner, particularly in the Upper Provinces, where the European supplies for the table are so expensive, that beer and wine are luxuries which prudent subaltern officers deny themselves. Where people of limited incomes do not choose to meet at tea and spend the evening cheerfully together, invitations must necessarily be restricted, and can only occur at long intervals. These station-dinners, as they are called, which in large cantonments are only given by persons who can afford them, and in extensive societies bring people agreeably together, are the dullest things imaginable when composed of some eight or ten individuals, who have nothing on earth to say to each other when they meet.

The family of the commandant of a small station, who were willing to promote sociability in any form that would be most acceptable to the circle around them, having failed in an attempt to introduce early dinners and evening parties, were content sometimes to put off their own repast for

the convenience of their guests, and to see company occasionally after the most approved fashion. The sacrifice of domestic comfort upon these occasions was very great indeed; the disarrangement of household economy formed but a small part of it, as it was merely necessary to substitute an early tiffin for the four o'clock dinner; but in incurring a certain expense, there was no commensurate gain in the solace of a dull and tedious day, to be got through, as usual, without exterior assistance. There is nothing so fatiguing as *ennui*; at nightfall, it would have been much more agreeable to prepare for bed than to sit upon the *chubootur*, or terrace, in expectation of guests, from whose conversational powers little pleasure could be anticipated; and frequent repetition had diminished the amusement at first derived from the great absurdity of making a formal and state affair of a meeting between persons located in the same wilderness, and whose happiness might have been so much increased by a more rational method of spending their time. At the hour prescribed by a goddess destined to reign supreme amidst the untamed savages, the wolves and hyænas of an Indian plain, these votaries of fashion began to arrive; carriage after carriage

drove up to the door, until the whole council of ten were fairly set down from their respective vehicles; the ladies dressed in ball attire, and the gentlemen uncomfortable in the prospect of being obliged to sit with their feet *under* instead of *on* the table, without their due allowance of cigars. To inordinate self-indulgence at home might be traced the difficulties of getting the station together in a sociable and friendly way; the decencies of life had become irksome to persons who were in the habit of lounging about their houses in *deshabille*; and this slatternly luxury could only be relinquished for something in the style of those great entertainments, which seemed to them to be alone worthy of any sacrifice of personal comfort. The dinner of course was dull, the conversation confined to those common-place topics which may be made agreeable in a family party, but which offer lenten entertainment to a formal circle. After a few hours, wasted in vain attempts to amuse people who belong to the most difficult class in the world, a sort of universal joy takes place at the separation; the guests are glad to go, the hosts are glad to see them depart; they have been defrauded of a comfortable sleep; they rejoice that a disagreeable

duty has been performed, and that a considerable period will elapse before they shall think themselves called upon to perform it again.

The peaceably inclined console themselves with the idea that it is far better to vegetate in this way than to live in a state of warfare; but there is generally at least one person in the community who thinks otherwise, and who, for the sake of a little variety, contrives to pick a quarrel with his neighbours—no difficult matter, where there is a disinclination to conform to the wishes of others. Indeed, it requires no inconsiderable portion of good sense and good temper to avoid giving offence to persons who expect a great deal and concede nothing; although they may refuse to lend themselves to any scheme proposed by the more active and social spirits, they are highly indignant when they are left out of such amusements as the place may afford. Should any strangers pass through, though they would never think of inviting them to their own houses, they take it much amiss if they should not be asked to meet them at the more hospitable mansions; they have no idea of being made conveniences of—sent for when there is nobody else; and to be asked in the evening, when there is a dinner party, is an indignity to which

they will not submit. In fact, such is the high tone of society in India, that no consideration of small rooms and limited space would excuse those who, in the attempt to bring a large party together, should ask a certain portion to join it after dinner; it is a thing not to be thought of.

Twenty persons formed the utmost number which could be accommodated at table in the bungalow before-mentioned, as the grand theatre of the station-dinners at a remote jungle. A regiment passing through, the family were anxious to invite all the strangers as well as the individuals composing their own circle, but it could not be accomplished; not a soul would condescend to come to tea; it was therefore necessary to make a selection: the married people were asked, and the young men were left to their tents. There was no use in giving them the option of coming in the evening, they would have been offended by so great a mark of disrespect as the supposition that they could be induced to act in a manner so derogatory to their dignity.

This spirit pervades every part of India; in Calcutta, the seats at a dinner party, vacated by any unforeseen contingency, cannot be filled up; intimate acquaintance, who would readily come in a friendly way at a day's notice, will not submit to

stop a gap after invitations to others have been sent out; where the party, not intended to be a large one, has been diminished by disappointments, the evil becomes very serious; upon such occasions, illnesses or deaths assume the character of affronts, for the guests who fulfil their engagements are, in nine cases out of ten, annoyed at having so few persons to meet them, and receive the apologies of the master and mistress of the house with ill-concealed resentment. The Medes and the Persians appear to have given the laws to Anglo-Indians; no innovation can be tolerated, and young men, who in England would feel honoured by being invited to attend the ladies in the drawing-room, must in India be treated with all the respect and consideration due to age and rank; they are offended by any distinction, and the ensign, if invited at all, must be invited with the same form and ceremony observed towards his colonel.

At the period of the relief, even the jungles participate in the amusements which the cold season produces all over India; they are seldom or never entirely out of the line of march, and the influx of strangers, although only for a couple of days, affords an agreeable variety to those who are happy to avail themselves of the change. Chanot

travellers pass through occasionally, even at the most hostile period of the year; but in the cold weather, pleasing expectations may be entertained of the arrival of guests, bringing with them the news and fashions of more frequented places. The appearance of a tent is always signified by the servants of a family known to delight in the performance of the duties of hospitality. If double-poled, the inhabitant must be a person of some rank; his name and quality are speedily discovered; and, in nineteen cases out of twenty, this revelation brings with it a tolerably accurate knowledge of the disposition and character.

People in India are well known by report throughout the whole of the Presidency to which they may be attached, and there are few whose acquaintance is so little desirable as to exclude them from the houses of social individuals condemned to solitude during a considerable period of the year. Where persons of congenial dispositions meet in this manner, the accidental collision leads to valuable friendships. A well-informed, well-educated civilian, travelling with two or three chests of books, by way of beguiling time, in a lonely journey, proved to be a prize of the first magnitude; the day was spent in lively discussion;

an interchange of volumes took place, and as the residence of the owner of an extensive library was *only* at the distance of three days' march, a prospect was opened of the most cheering kind, since the assistance of a *cooly* could at any time procure a fresh supply of standard works from the well-filled shelves of this accommodating *neighbour*. The inhabitants of the station had been accustomed to send to a miserable circulating library, about a hundred miles off, for the "last new work by the author of *Waverley*," and were often fain to be content with the refuse of the Minerva press: happy were they, when the unconscious messenger deposited at their feet the lucubrations of some popular writer!

The exquisite delight of reading a book really worth reading in an Indian jungle is almost worth a journey to the wilds of Hindostan, especially if it should arrive upon one of those sultry, oppressive days, in which the hot wind blows from a wrong quarter; when weariness and listlessness prevail, and each member of the family, stretched at length upon a sofa, can cherish no hope of entertainment beyond that afforded by a reverie, in which he may transport himself to more genial skies. The dreary monotony of time passed in this manner is some-

times broken in upon by the unexpected arrival of a *dāh* traveller, who makes his appearance without the note of preparation sounded by blows upon the tent-pins. A palanquin is seen making its way through the dust; the soiled, travel-stained, weary look of the bearers, the baggage, and utensils heaped on the top of the vehicle, announce that it belongs to a wayfarer, and presently it is deposited at the door. The servants in waiting rush in with the intelligence that there is a strange gentleman outside; the master of the house, who is of course sitting without his jacket, makes a hasty toilette, and advances to receive his guest, who enters sometimes more than half-dead, red and roasted, by long exposure to hot air, cramped with lying for so many hours in a palanquin, and so completely covered with dust that it is difficult to determine what has been the original hue and texture of his garments. He is ushered, in the first instance, to the bathing-room, where a plentiful ablution, change of clothes, and a glass of brandy and water enable him to shake off his fatigue and join the family circle. The transition from a hot, jolting conveyance—a moving dungeon—to a spacious and comparatively cool apartment, is the most enjoyable thing in the world; the miseries of the past are

forgotten, and the lately subdued and jaded traveller soon becomes sufficiently recovered to impart as much pleasure as he receives. A renewal of the journey in the cool of the evening is anticipated without dread: it is only when the great distance from station to station obliges a European to travel through the heat of the day, that much difficulty and annoyance must be endured.

The natives, Hindoos in particular, choose the most oppressive season for long journeys, which they frequently perform in the hottest hours of the four-and-twenty. Marriage-processions are then to be seen traversing the roads in great abundance, and where a *bungalow* commands a view of the highway, a good deal of amusement may be derived from the fantastic pomp exhibited upon these occasions. The poorest make a faint attempt at magnificence; but their humble bridals are distinguished only by yellow garments and blaring trumpets; neither noise nor turmeric is wanting, and the eyes are dazzled and the ears split as the revel rout pass along. Camels, horses, palanquins, and *rhats*, more or less ornamented, accompany the march of the wealthy suitor; but it is only in the marriage-retinue of a great man that there is much display of wealth and grandeur. The wedding, or rather the

betrothment of a son of a rich noble (for the bridegroom was a child of eight or ten years old), celebrated with all the pomp and splendour which the rank and fortune of the parties could command, afforded an agreeable spectacle to the dullest of dull cantonments. The natives affect a great deal of state, and make as much show as possible with the means which they possess; accordingly, the line of march was stretched out to its utmost length. A small troop of camels, jingling all over with bells, and richly bedizened with tufts of various colours, led the van; behind them came bullock-carriages, covered with scarlet cloth; then a company of grave personages mounted on tattoos; next, two or three open palanquins, canopied with fringed curtains, in one of which the little bridegroom gleamed and glittered like a rich ornament in a velvet casket. After these, a stately elephant appeared, bearing a silver *howdah*, screened from the sun by an umbrella of all the colours of the rainbow; this was followed by a disorderly troop of *suwars* or soldiers, ill-clad and ill-mounted, and trailing clumsy uncouth matchlocks and harquebusses along; more camels, more bullock-carts, more servants, on horseback and on foot, armed and unarmed, some carrying spears and bucklers,

and some blowing trumpets ; more elephants marching singly, at a great distance from each other ; more palanquins, some shut, some open, and all decorated with gold and silver ; and, to crown all, an old-fashioned English gig, with a nondescript kind of harness and a horse of the alligator species, wherein two men in flowing green robes and white turbans were seated, with strange incongruity, found a place amid a procession in which all else was truly Asiatic.

In gazing upon a spectacle of this nature, Europeans are often startled by the apparition of an old coach, which looks as if it had been taken off one of the stands of London, with a native head proudly stuck out of the worm-eaten, rat-eaten, worn-out rusty vehicle, to which neither paint nor varnish have been applied for many a long year. Highly delighted with a *bellatee garree* (European carriage), they never trouble themselves about the manner in which it may be kept ; and, as long as it will hang together, however tatterdemallion may be its condition, exhibit it on state occasions with undisguised exultation.

The bringing home of the young bride, after the betrothment had taken place, was rendered more picturesque by the passage through the can-

tonments being performed at night. The bells of the camels and elephants announced the approach of the cavalcade, and it certainly made a very splendid appearance by the light of innumerable torches. The palanquins glanced along like gorgeous birds, the fluttering of the fringed curtains being alone distinguishable; the camels assumed somewhat of a supernatural appearance, as their nodding plumes, arched necks, and shapeless humps appeared and disappeared in the flickering glare; the elephants looked like moving monuments of black marble, and strange monsters—flying griffins—and chimeras dire—might be dimly shaped out amid the promiscuous multitude of horse and foot, which spread themselves over the broad road; while the wild discord of the music, and the shout and cry always an accompaniment of an Asiatic procession, joined to the partial illumination of flaming torches, gave to the whole an air of mystery and romance, and no fanciful imagination could forbear associating the rajah, despite his attendant in the gig, with some potent magician, summoning good and evil genii to his aid, in protecting or kidnapping the hopeful heir of a neighbouring monarch. In beholding these strange pageants, the wonders of an Arabian tale become realities; we are no longer

surprised at the wild phantasies of the authors; they may justly be said to draw from nature, and to present to their readers, if not existing objects, things as they appeared in the chaotic confusion of men and animals crowding together at night. In driving home from late parties, in the Upper Provinces, Europeans frequently encounter strange groups of very unearthly character; incantation scenes, which would make the fortune of a manager of a minor theatre, and solitary individuals so withered and so wild in their attire as to be absolutely startling. Three or four demoniac-looking personages, of a horrid blackness, half-clad in uncouth garments, will suddenly emerge from some ravine, brandishing flaring torches, and making the air ring with discordant cries, and the clang of still more fearful instruments. They seem as if they were that instant disgorged from the subterranean dominions of some mighty magician; and it is only by an effort of reason that the mind can be divested of the idea that these masqueraders actually belong to the invisible world. The performers are usually Hindoos engaged in religious ceremonies, and they certainly contrive to equal in horror the most frightful descriptions of the writers of fiction. A disguise of this kind is sometimes assumed to cover

desperate undertakings, and even bridal processions are made subservient to the designs of robbers.

The treasure collected by officers employed in the revenue branch of the service, is frequently the object of hostile attempts. It is always conveyed to a place of security under a guard of sepoy, and the officer commanding takes care to encamp in some strong secure place, at a considerable distance from a town or village, and where the approach of a band of marauders may be easily descried. But, on one occasion, the robbers practised a *ruse de guerre*, which proved eminently successful; they clothed themselves in yellow garments, and, crowding together in the promiscuous throngs which are commonly assembled in nuptial cavalcades, effectually deceived the sentinels, who, looking upon them as the guests of some gay wedding, did not discover their real intentions until they were surrounded, and resistance was rendered hopeless.

The inhabitants of a jungle-station frequently, during the cold weather, betake themselves to canvas, and change the scene a little by forming hunting and shooting parties in the most picturesque spots in the district. The ladies are usually included in these engagements, and when there is any

congeniality of disposition, a few days or weeks may be passed very delightfully in the wildest solitudes. Elephants are too expensive animals to be generally maintained by private individuals belonging to the Anglo-Indian community; but as they are indispensable in attacking the highest species of game, they are borrowed for the time from the commissariat, or from rich natives, who are always willing to lend them, or to assist in any sport which may require the aid of those animals, which they delight to train for the field. Though hawks are frequently kept by Europeans stationed in the Upper Provinces of Hindostan, they are seldom so numerous or so well taught as those belonging to native gentlemen, Hindoos especially, who, if they should be strict in their religious principles, cannot enjoy the pleasures of the chase, unless their falcons are so admirably broken in as to take the prey alive. Notwithstanding their scruples respecting the destruction of animal life, they do not object to be present at the slaughter of a hecatomb of victims. On one occasion, though no Hindoo could be found to cut the throat of a partridge captured by a hawk, and to whom a libation of blood was to be offered, a Brahmin, acting in the capacity of a chuprassee, readily relinquished

his sword to a Moosulman for the purpose. Hawking in India, to those who are not bent upon the extermination of beasts of prey, is one of the most exhilarating things in the world, and the sport is peculiarly suited to feminine participation. To ladies, hog-hunting is of course quite out of the question, and there are very few whose nerves could stand against the terror and carnage of an expedition against tigers, to say nothing of the fatigue to be encountered in a chase which frequently lasts for hours under a burning sun. Hawking, where there is less excitement, may be relinquished at pleasure, and the pursuit of game leads the party into wildernesses far removed from the dwellings of man. The sylvan denizens of the soil are seen in their native haunts; the majestic nylghau, roused at the approach of intruders, scours across the plain, or crashes through the boughs of a neighbouring thicket; herds of antelopes are seen grazing, and at every step the elephant puts up some beautiful bird or some strange and interesting animal; wolves and bears may be detected stealing off to a more secluded covert, whilst the porcupine utters its shrill cry of alarm, and the monkey gibbers at the passing pageant.

Wild geese afford the best sport; they soar ex-

ceedingly high, and frequently bid defiance to the falcon's adventurous wings. Smaller birds, partridges especially, have no chance of escape, and when appearing on the edge of those basin-like valleys, which so frequently diversify the plains of India, their capture is seen to great advantage from the back of an elephant, as the spectator can look down upon the whole scene; and following the flight of the hawk along the steep, where the frightened partridge hurries for shelter, observe the fatal precision of his aim, and see him pounce directly on the victim, which he bears to the falconer in his claw. In some parts of the country, the largest description of the hawk is trained to the chase, and its murderous talons are directed against antelopes and the smaller kinds of deer; it darts at the head of the quarry, blinds and confuses it with its flapping wings, tears it with its beak and claws, and finally succeeds in depriving it of life. This is not, however, a common exhibition, and is seldom witnessed except at the courts of native princes. Hunting with *cheetahs* (leopards) is more commonly practised; but though the manœuvres of the cat-like pursuer are exceedingly curious and interesting, as they develop the nature and habits of the animal, there is nothing

noble, generous, or exciting in the sport. The *cheetahs*, hooded like hawks, are secured by a slight harness to a platform fastened on a bullock-cart; their keeper holds the beasts in his hand, and those who wish to obtain a good view of the chase, take a seat beside the driver. Antelopes, accustomed to the sight of bullocks, will permit them to make a much nearer approach than any less familiar animal. When the carts have arrived at a prudent distance from the herd, the driver halts, the *cheetahs* are unloosed, and espying the prey, they drop silently off the vehicle, taking care to choose the contrary side from that on which the deer are feeding. They steal, crouching along the ground, screening themselves behind every bush, hillock, or tuft of grass which may occur in their way, pausing occasionally when there seems to be any danger of a premature alarm; each has singled out his victim, and measuring the distance with an experienced eye, they dart forward with a sudden bound. Two or three springs ensure success or disappointment; the victor alights upon his prey. But if a threatened antelope should have the good fortune to escape the first attempt, no second effort is made; the *cheetah* returns growling and in ill-humour to his keeper; he has lost his advantage,

and sullenly relinquishes a field which must be won fairly by strength and speed.

The poorer class of natives, who take up the occupation of hunters for their own subsistence, or pecuniary emolument, sometimes avail themselves of the services of a bullock in approaching within shot of a herd of antelopes. Theirs is a matter of business, not of excitement, and they have no idea of allowing a chance to the objects of their pursuit. A bullock is carefully trained for the purpose, and when his education is completed, he makes a quiet entrance into the jungles, followed closely by his master, who contrives to screen himself completely behind the animal. The bullock grazes carelessly as he advances, making circuitous and apparently unpremeditated movements ; at last he arrives at a convenient distance without having disturbed the unconscious herd ; he then stands still, the *shikaree*, or hunter, fixes his clumsy matchlock along the back of the animal, and still unseen takes unerring aim : down drops the devoted antelope, and away fly the rest of the herd, dispersed and out of sight in an instant. Europeans rarely witness this kind of sport, if such it may be called ; but it sometimes falls to the lot of a solitary traveller, who from some elevation obtains an extensive view over a

wide plain, to have an opportunity of watching the singular manœuvres employed by the hunter and his uncouth agent.

Where the weapons at hand are inefficient for open warfare, stratagems must supply the place of more generous hostility ; and even Anglo-Indians are sometimes compelled to adopt native arts, and when the assistance of elephants cannot be procured, they will condescend to lay a bait for a tiger, and sit patiently in a tree until the fierce animal shall repair to his evening repast, and they can shoot him while, in fancied security, he is indulging his appetite ; others, disdaining such unwarlike defences, will encounter a tiger singly on horseback. This is of course a very difficult and dangerous enterprise ; few steeds, however noble, can be brought to face an enemy of which they entertain an instinctive dread. The vicinity of a tiger is often discovered by the distress and terror exhibited by horses, which even in their stables have been known to fall into fits of trembling and perspiration, occasioned by their secret conviction that their foe is at hand ; and when a horse is found sufficiently courageous to encounter so terrible a savage, the most extraordinary activity, coolness, presence of mind, accuracy of eye and strength of

arm, are necessary to ensure the victory. The hunter, after putting up the tiger, wheels round him in a circle at full speed, never permitting, in the rapidity of his movements, a single moment for the fatal spring; and when the tiger, bewildered and dazzled, offers an unguarded front, pins him to earth with the thrust of a spear. Such enterprises must be of rare occurrence, and can only be contemplated by adventurous spirits delighting in the excitement produced by the wild and dangerous sports of India, and anxiously bent upon braving the most fearful terrors of the field.

A long residence in the Upper Provinces is extremely favourable to pursuits of this nature; during protracted intervals of peace, active minds are driven to difficult and perilous exploits for the employment of their vacant hours; inured to desperate hazards, should any real emergence call for their services, they face grim-visaged war with stern delight; and though the scene is too distant, and the campaigns too unimportant to Europe, to attract much attention at home, the dangers dared and the deeds which are done by the gallant youth of our Eastern army, are not inferior to the most spirit-stirring enterprises chronicled in the records of chivalry. Where there are no wild beasts to be encountered,

fatigues and hardships of another kind are eagerly sought out. To ride easily and without stopping, that hard-trotting beast, an express-camel, becomes an object of ambition.

During the Mahratta war, one or two corps of dromedaries were formed; two men, completely armed, were mounted on each animal, but though traversing the country in an incredibly short period of time, these troops were unserviceable, in consequence of the exhaustion of the soldiers, occasioned by the dreadful jolting of their mode of conveyance. Some European officers, however, will ride these camels at their swiftest pace: thus qualifying themselves for the conveyance of orders or despatches, should their services ever be required in that way. Meanwhile, it affords an agreeable diversion to beguile time destined to be spent in almost interminable sands; and should duty or pleasure call them to less remote stations, they astonish the fastidious and refined society there, by bringing to it habits and manners contracted in lonely and sequestered places. An European officer, mounted on a camel, is a strange sight on the British side of the central provinces of India, and inevitably procures for him the appellation of *jungle-wallah*. Others exhibit themselves with their hair cut so

closely to their skulls, for coolness, as to look exactly as if they had just escaped from a mad-house ; some people ask who the gentleman is without a *chopper*, a witticism which can only be understood by those who are versed in the architecture of country-boats and bungalows, of which the thatched roofs are denominated *choppers*.

In the midland stations of Hindostan, a great deal of amusement may be derived from the varieties of costume and manners displayed by arrivals from Europe and Calcutta, and those from the frontier towards the Himalaya, or the deserts of Nussereabad. Where two ladies are dancing *vis-à-vis* in the same quadrille, there will be a difference of at least ten yards in the skirts of their gowns, the one expanding in the amplitude prescribed by a London or Parisian *modiste*, the other cramped in the narrow dimensions which obtained at the period of her outfit, some ten years before. A few of the wardrobes of India are actual curiosities, presenting modes and manufactures now unhappily lost to the fashionable world. The writer admits with shame that her attention was once distracted from a sermon, by the contemplation of a most remarkable fabric of cambric muslin, interwoven with a sort of lace-work, the like of which her eyes

had never till that hour beheld ; at another time the vision of a brown muslin spotted with gold absorbed every faculty and arrested a due reply to the *burra beebie*, who had rescued this antiquated piece of raiment from the depths of some neglected wardrobe, apparently unconscious of the extraordinary sensation it would create. The gentlemen are not a whit behind the ladies : some of them affect the Asiatic style of dress, and wear long beards ; elderly civilians have their clothes made by native *dirzees*, after the patterns which they brought out with them, and the most eccentric coverings for the head are adopted, hats of straw or of white cotton, and foraging-caps of every description : the newly-arrived dandy gazes with horror and surprise ; but his gay apparel soon loses its gloss ; he finds it convenient to change his cloth coat for one made of shining China silk ; the dresses of the visitors from the jungles are re-modelled, and thus an equilibrium is preserved, and people in remote districts become enlightened on the subject of modern inventions.

CHAPTER X.

A G R A.

IN this age of tourists, it is rather extraordinary that the travelling mania should not extend to the possessions of the British Government in India; and that so few persons are induced to visit scenes and countries in the East, embellished with the most gorgeous productions of nature and of art. The city of Agra is well worthy of a pilgrimage from the uttermost parts of the globe: yet a very small number amid those who have spent many years in Hindostan are tempted to pay it a visit; and the civil and military residents, together with casual travellers passing through to the places of their destination, alone, are acquainted with a city boasting all the oriental magnificence which imagination has pictured from the glowing descriptions of eastern tales. The Smelfungus tribe is very numerous in India; necessity, and not "a truant disposition," has occasioned the greater portion of the servants of the Company to traverse foreign

lands; and the sole remark frequently made by persons who have sojourned amid the marble temples and citron groves of Agra, consists of a simple statement, that "it is exceedingly hot." Bishop Heber, who possessed a true relish for the sublime and beautiful, and who delighted with all a poet's enthusiasm in the picturesque, has not done Agra justice in his interesting narrative. He was ill during the brief period of his sojourn there, and had come immediately from Delhi, the stately rival of the city of Acbar. This is the more unfortunate, as his work, being very popular, and considered good authority, has led a favourite writer of the day to portray ruin and desolation as the prominent features of Agra; whereas, though somewhat shorn of the splendour it possessed in the times of the Moghul emperors, it is still a place of wealth and importance, inhabited by rich natives, both Moosulman and Hindoo, and carrying on an extensive trade. Should steam-navigation ever be introduced with effect upon the Ganges and Jumna, there can be little doubt that the seat of government will be, at some time, removed from Calcutta to a more central station, and the probabilities are greatly in favour of Agra being the selected spot. In this event, improvements of vast magnitude may

be expected to take place in the upper country. The hill-stations especially will be benefited by the influx of visitors; they must necessarily be enlarged; roads must be made, bridges constructed, gardens cultivated, and public buildings erected, until they will offer the accommodations of European watering-places, in addition to the far superior attractions of their scenery. Persons weary of Cheltenham, Baden, Spa, and other springs of fashionable resort, may take a trip to the Himalaya, and visit the source of the Ganges by way of variety. Even now, it would be perfectly practicable for a tourist, in search of novelty, to climb the heights of the Asiatic mountains to the limits of eternal snow, that untrodden barrier which has defied, and will defy, the adventurous foot of man, and return to England, without experiencing a single day in which the thermometer shall have risen beyond the bounds of moderate heat. By landing in Calcutta in the middle of October, four months of cold weather is secured, a period sufficient to admit of easy travelling through the Upper Provinces, *vid* Benares, Lucknow, Agra, Bhurt-pore, Delhi, and Meerut; from the latter station it is only a few marches, or a three days' journey by *dák* (post), to Landour, a sanatorium perched

upon the crags of the Himalaya. This place, and Mussooree, another hill-cantonment, should form the head-quarters during the eight months of heat endured in the plains; and in the following October, passing through the central provinces, and visiting Jyepore, Nusseerabad, Ajmere, and Mhow, the tourist may proceed to Bombay, and take his passage home before the commencement of the hot weather.

To a lover of the picturesque, Agra is one of the most delightful stations in India; but as persons of this description form a very small portion of the community, a residence amid the splendid monuments of Moghul power is not considered desirable, in consequence of the alleged heat of the climate, and the high prices demanded for the bungalows. It possesses a garrison, consisting of one European or King's corps, and three of Native Infantry, with their requisite staff, under the command of a brigadier. The military cantonments are the ugliest in India, being situated upon a wide bare plain, enlivened only by a few *Parkinsonias*,* trees which are too uniformly covered with yellow flowers to appear to advantage when not mingled

* So called from having been introduced into India from the Cape by Colonel Parkinson.

with others of more varied foliage. The Jumna is completely hid from view by intervening sand-banks, which also shut out the beauties of the Taaje Mahal, with the exception of its silvery dome; and the exteriors of the bungalows, with few exceptions, are hideous. They are usually built of brick, a material amply supplied by the ruins in the neighbourhood; the gateless, and sometimes fenceless compounds, have a desolate appearance; and a handsome church is the only redeeming feature in the scene. The houses, however, have good gardens, though the latter are not made ornamental to the landscape; and their interiors are remarkable for the elegance of the fitting-up, an abundance of marble furnishing chimney-pieces, cornices, and plasters of a very superior kind of chunam; and, instead of bare white-washed walls, the apartments are decorated with handsome mouldings and other architectural ornaments. The civil lines, at the distance of two miles, are much more beautifully situated, amidst well-wooded ravines, which, during the rainy season, are covered with a verdant carpet of green, and watered by numerous nullahs. The roads are excellent, and kept in the finest order by the labours of gangs of convicts who are employed upon the

public works of British India. Many of the houses belonging to the families of civilians are *puckha*, and built in the style of those of Calcutta; others assume a more fanciful aspect, the centre being composed of an abandoned mosque, or tomb, with wings spreading on either side.

The distance between the military and civil lines at Agra constitutes a very considerable obstacle to the social intercourse of the station: throughout India there exists a degree of jealousy on the part of the former, which renders them tenacious of appearing to shew too much deference to the superior wealth of the judges and collectors, whom they fancy must look down upon a poorer class. There are, of course, a few instances of civilians in high appointments, who hold themselves far above their less fortunate military compeers,—a set of persons who have obtained the cognomen of “Buhádur,” a very significant phrase, borrowed from the title of honour bestowed by natives upon great men, or assumed by those who desire to give themselves consequence;—but, generally speaking, the civilians, being fewer in number, are glad to pay attention to all the military in the neighbourhood; and—at least during my residence at Agra—they made far less difficulty in coming over to the balls

in the cantonments than was raised by the families of officers, who frequently declined invitations to the civil lines on account of the distance, or because they would not receive civilities which they were unable to return. This sort of pride is very detrimental to the society of small communities; and at Agra it always appears to be in full operation, the station never having had a reputation for gaiety.

There are no subscription-balls at Agra, and dancing depends upon the hospitalities exercised by private individuals; a play is occasionally performed at the theatre, a building of no exterior beauty, and whose properties are of a very inferior order; and races have been established, which, however, bear no proportion to the celebrity acquired by those at Meerut and Ghazeepore.

It is in the city of Agra and its environs that intellectual persons must seek gratification. The Taaje Mahal is usually deemed the most attractive object, and, considered in its character of a mausoleum, it has not its equal in the world. The reader of Eastern romance may here realize his dreams of fairy land, and contemplate those wondrous scenes so faithfully delineated in the brilliant pages of the Arabian Nights. Imagine a wild plain, broken into deep sandy ravines, the picture

of rudeness and desolation, a tract as unpromising as that which Prince Ahmed traversed in search of his arrow. In the midst of this horrid wilderness, a palace of deep red stone, inlaid with white marble, and surmounted by domes and open cupolas, appears. It is ascended by flights of steps; in the centre is a large circular hall, with a domed roof, and a gallery running round, all in the most beautiful style of Oriental architecture. This is the gate of the TaaJe Mahal, a building which, in any other place, would detain the visitant in rapture at the symmetry and grandeur of its proportions, and the exquisite elegance of the finishing; but the eyes have caught a glimpse of a delicious garden, and the splendours of this noble entrance are little regarded. At the end of a long avenue of graceful cypresses, whose rich foliage is beautifully mirrored in marble basins, fed with water from numerous sparkling fountains, the TaaJe arises, gleaming like a fairy palace. It is wholly composed of polished marble of the whitest hue; and if there be any faults in the architecture, they are lost in the splendour of the material, which conveys the idea of something even more brilliant than marble, mother-o'-pearl, or glistening spar. No description can do justice to this shining edifice, which seems

rather to belong to the fanciful creations of a dream than to the sober realities of waking life—constructed of gathered moonbeams, or the lilies which spring in paradise. The mausoleum is placed upon a square platform of white marble, rising abruptly to the height of about twelve or fifteen feet, the steps being concealed, which is perhaps a blemish. The place of actual sepulture is a chamber within this platform; round it on three sides are suites of apartments, consisting of three rooms in each, all of white marble, having lattices of perforated marble for the free transmission of air, and opening to the garden. At each of the four corners of the platform, a lofty minaret* springs, and the centre is occupied by an octagonal building, crowned by a dome, surrounded by open cupolas of inferior height. Nothing can be more beautiful or more chaste: even the window-frames are composed of marble; and it would seem as if a part of Aladdin's palace had been secured from the general wreck, and placed in the orange groves of Agra. The plan of the building, which is purely Asiatic, is said to have been the design

* These minarets, though beautiful in themselves, have a formal appearance as they stand, and look too much like high and slender castles upon a gigantic chess-board.

of the founder, who placed the execution in the hands of foreigners of eminence. The interior is embellished with beautiful mosaics, in rich patterns of flowers, so delicately formed, that they look like embroidery upon white satin, thirty-five different specimens of cornelians being employed in a single leaf of a carnation ; while agates, lapis lazuli, turquoise, and other precious materials, occur in profusion. The mausoleum, washed by the Jumna, looks out upon that bright and rapid river ; and its gardens of many acres, planted with flowery forest trees, and interspersed with buildings and fountains, stretch to the banks of the stream. It is truly a place which a votary of Mohammed would form from his ideas of the paradise of the true-believer, haunted by beautiful birds of variegated plumage, and filled with blossoms of every scent and hue.

No lover of ancient or modern times ever testified more genuine attachment to the memory of the object of his affection, than that which is recorded by this enchanting edifice. It was erected under the auspices of the Emperor Shah Jehan, the son of Jehanguire and the father of Aurungzebe, who, however failing in his duty as a son, in his character of a husband and a father stands unrivalled.

When his beloved wife, Moom Taza Mhal, lay dying, in the passionate anguish of his heart he assured her, that as, while existing, she surpassed in loveliness and virtue all the women of her time, so after her decease she should possess a monument which should be unequalled in the world. He fulfilled his promise. It was his intention to have built a mausoleum of similar magnificence upon the opposite side of the river, for himself, and to have connected both by a marble bridge across the Jumna; but the troubles of his reign did not allow him to complete this superb design, and his bones repose beside those of the object dearest to him while on earth. To Shah Jehan's strong paternal affection we are indebted for our first settlement in Hindostan; he gave a grant of land in Bengal to an English physician travelling through Agra, as a token of his gratitude for the restoration of one of his daughters, whose malady was subdued by the stranger's skill and attention.

In wandering over the princely gardens of the Taaje Mahal, the monarch's virtues alone can be remembered, and it is with feelings of no common gratification that those who are not wholly engrossed by passing objects add a flower to the fresh coronals daily strewed upon the monarch's grave.

The natives of Agra are justly proud of the *Tasja Mahal*; they are pleased with the admiration manifested by strangers, and gratified by the care and attention bestowed to keep it in repair: upon Sunday evenings especially, crowds of Moosulmans of all descriptions, rich and poor, visit the gardens, and contribute not a little, by their picturesque groups, to the attraction of the scene.

At the distance of about a mile from the "palace-tomb," for that is the signification of its name, stands the fort of Agra, a place of great strength in former times, before the introduction of fire-arms. One side is defended by the river, the others are surrounded by high battlemented walls of red stone, furnished with turrets and loop-holes, and, in addition to several postern entrances, a most magnificent building, called the Delhi-gate. Perhaps Lord Byron himself, when he stood upon the Bridge of Sighs, his heart swelling with reminiscences of Othello, Shylock, and Pierre, scarcely experienced more overwhelming sensations than the humble writer of this paper, when gazing, for the first time, upon the golden crescent of the Moslems, blazing high in the fair blue heavens, from the topmost pinnacle of this splendid relique of their power and pride. The delights of my childhood rushed to my

soul; those magic tales, from which, rather than from the veritable pages of history, I had gathered my knowledge of eastern arts and arms, arose in all their original vividness. I felt that I was indeed in the land of genii, and that the gorgeous palaces, the flowery labyrinths, the orient gems, and glittering thrones so long classed with ideal splendours, were not the fictitious offspring of romance.

Europe does not possess a more interesting relique of the days of feudal glory than that afforded by the fort of Agra. The interior presents a succession of inclined planes, so constructed (the stones with which they are paved being cut into grooves) that horses, and even carriages may pass up and down. The illustrations of fortified places, in Froissart's Chronicle, offer an accurate representation of these ascents, where knights on horseback are depicted riding down a steep hill while descending from the walls.

The fort is of very considerable extent, and contains many objects of interest and curiosity. The Mootee Musjid, or pearl mosque, disputes the palm of beauty with the Taaje Mahal, and is by many persons preferred to that celebrated edifice. Neither drawing nor description can do it justice, for the purity of the material and the splendour of the

architecture defy the powers of the pencil and the pen. An oblong hall stretches its arcades along one side of a noble quadrangle, surrounded by richly sculptured cloisters; whence at intervals spring light and elegant cupolas, supported upon slender pillars. The whole is of polished white marble, carved even to the very slabs that compose the pavement; and when moonlight irradiates the scene, the effect is magical.

Acbar was the first of the Moghul emperors who, preferring Agra as a residence to its neighbour Delhi, embellished and beautified the city; his name, as the "mighty lord," is of course held in great reverence by the inhabitants, and his tomb, a gorgeous pyramidical structure, at about five miles distance, is scarcely less an object of admiration than the Taaje. The durbar, or hall of audience, a magnificent apartment, is converted into an arsenal; but the marble palace remains nearly in the same state in which it was left by the Jauts, when the city was taken by Lord Lake. After the beautiful buildings already mentioned, this palace, though very rich and splendid, has comparatively little to recommend it. If, however, wanting in the external attractions of its prouder rivals, it is not less interesting on account of the recollections attached

to it, having been the residence of some of the most celebrated conquerors of the East. It is pleasantly situated upon the banks of the Jumna, which its balconied chambers overlook. The hall, formerly ceiled with silver, is still a fine apartment; but the smaller suites of rooms, being more singular, are more interesting to a stranger. These are mostly of an octagonal form, leading out of each other, or connected by a smaller antichamber; they are composed of white marble, the walls, floors, and roofs being all of the same material, the former decorated with mosaics of flowers rudely executed in many-coloured agates and cornelians. The windows open upon narrow balconies, having very low parapet-walls, which overhang the Jumna: the bosom of the river is gay with boats, and the opposite bank finely planted, and adorned with bright pavilions glancing from between the trees, or raised upon some jutting point of land. From these suites, flights of marble stairs lead to the roof, which is flat, and commands a still nobler view. The plan of the palace is very curious as seen from this elevation: with the exception of the range of buildings fronting the river, it is laid out in small quadrangles, each with its garden or its bath in the centre. One of these, destined for a retreat during

the hot winds, is particularly curious. It contains a square apartment of tolerable dimensions, unprovided with windows. The walls are lined with fantastic ornaments of spar, silver, and other glittering materials, intermixed with small oddly-shaped pieces of looking-glass; the pavement is cut into channels, for the purpose of allowing a perpetual flow of running water in the hot season. Here the emperors were wont to retire during the most sultry hours, substituting the glare of torches for the light of day, and admiring, doubtless, the barbaric splendour with which they were surrounded.

The palace of Agra has been frequently irradiated by the presence of the 'Light of the Harem,' the beautiful Nourmahal, one incident in whose eventful life has been immortalized by the pen of Mr. Moore. The marvellous adventures of her history might fill a volume. Shere Afkun, the husband who stood between her and a throne, was one of the paladins of Eastern chivalry, and the deeds imputed to him, by authentic records, are only to be paralleled in the pages of romance: he seems to have formed his character after that of Rustum Khan, or some other poetical hero equally celebrated. He is said to have rushed unarmed upon a lion, and quelled the monster single-handed; and

when, after a hundred victories in perilous adventures, in which his cruel master involved him, for the purpose of procuring his death: in a struggle with twelve assassins, he fell at last; he yielded rather to the determined hatred of the king than to the weapons of his murderers; throwing away a life embittered by ingratitude. Nourmahal, by her intrigues for her children's elevation, her caprice, and her revenge, endangered the sceptre of her imperial husband a thousand times, yet maintained her ascendancy over him to the latest period of life. Once he was wrought upon, by the representations of a faithful friend, to consent to her death, but could not refuse a farewell interview: the consequences were such as had been predicted; she regained her influence, and the realm was again distracted by civil dissension. Highly accomplished, according to the fashion of her country and the age in which she flourished, Nourmahal was indeed the 'light of the harem;' her inexhaustible fancy devised new schemes of pleasure for each day and hour, and in her seductive society a luxurious monarch forgot his duties as well as his cares. Nourmahal can make no pretensions to excellence as a wife; for, if not consenting to the persecution of her first husband, she tacitly sanctioned his rival's

pretensions; while to her second she brought discord and ruin; but, as a parent and a child, she seems to have acted in an exemplary manner.

On the opposite bank of the Jumna, near the stately gardens of the Rambaugh, said to have been originally planted and laid out by Jehanghire, stands one of the most beautiful specimens of Oriental architecture which India can boast—the tomb of Utta ma Dowlah, the beloved father of the empress Nourmahal. Anxious to ensure its durability, she proposed to erect this monument of silver, as a less perishable material than stone; but some judicious friend assured her that marble would not be so liable to demolition, and accordingly, Time alone has injured a building which the Jauts were not tempted to plunder. It is lamentable that the British Government should have limited its expenditure to the repairs of the Taaje Mahal, and that so beautiful a gem of art should be suffered, for want of the necessary repairs, to fall into decay; its surrounding garden is now a wilderness, destitute of fences, and this exquisite monument is left to the care of a few poor natives, who lament over the neglect sustained by the great lord, once the pride and glory of the East. The attention paid to the dead, forms a beautiful

trait in the Moosulmaun character. Kingdoms have passed away, and dynasties have failed, and while nothing of the magnificence of the silent tenants of the tomb is left save the name, their graves are still honoured and respected, and flowers are strewed over them, and lamps are burned, by those who have long submitted to foreign dominion. Utta ma Dowlah's tomb is one of the most attractive spots in the immediate neighbourhood of Agra. It is within the compass of a morning or evening drive; and the gardens of the Rambaugh, in its close vicinity, are as splendid as those we read of in the Arabian tales. From the roof of this monument one of those views are obtained which, once seen, can never be forgotten. The blue waters of the Jumna wind through a rich champaign country, with gardens stretching down on either side to its rippling current; opposite, the city of Agra, with its bastioned fort, its marble palace, splendid cupolas, and broad ghauts, intermixed with trees, stands, in all the pomp of eastern architecture: below, in silvery pride, the lustrous Taaje Mahal is seen; and, far as the eye can reach, country houses, decorated with light pavilions springing close to the margin of the stream, diversify the landscape.

The tomb of Acbar, like that of *Uttā ma Dowlah*, is falling into a state of dilapidation. Its splendid gate is threatening to fall, and the once luxuriant park is now wild and desolate. It is on the road to this celebrated mausoleum that the decay of Agra is most visible ; at every step, we pass the remains of houses, which shew how far the city formerly extended. *Secundra*, a village in the close vicinity of Acbar's tomb, also has fallen from its high estate, and exhibits a succession of ruined buildings. Its name affords one of the numerous evidences of the fond belief entertained by the natives of Hindostan, that Alexander the Great crossed the Indus. As he could only have traversed India as its conqueror, it is extraordinary that they should cling so tenaciously to the idea ; but numerous towns, which he is supposed either to have founded or visited, are named after him *Secundra*, and the people imagine that they possess his remains ; a tomb at the summit of *Secundermallee*, a mountain in the Carnatic, being said to be that of Alexander. Probably the invasions of some of his successors may have led to the error : but it is one too strongly cherished to be abandoned, for all castes reverence his memory, and boast his exploits as if they had cause to be proud of both.

The mausoleum of Acbar is of a character admirably suited to the splendid barbarian to whom it is dedicated. It is more difficult to describe than the TaaJe Mahal, to which, however, it does not bear the slightest resemblance. Superb colonnades of white marble sweep on either side a gigantic pyramid of red stone. Below, in a dark vault, illumined only by a single lamp, lies the body of Acbar; but each of many stories arising above contains a sarcophagus, placed over the spot where his remains are interred; and the lofty building terminates in a square roofless chamber of white marble, whose walls are perforated in exquisite patterns, and which enclose the last and the most beautiful of the marble coffins. Narrow flights of stairs lead to a terraced platform surrounding low corridors, and decorated at the angles with open cupolas faced with blue enamel and gold; a second flight leads to another platform of smaller dimensions, similarly embellished, and a third and a fourth story succeed. The view from each is magnificent, and the design, though certainly grotesque, is rendered majestic by the air of grandeur imparted by the immense size of the building. At Futtehpoore Secri, and at Deeg, distant a few marches from the city of Agra, there are equally

splendid remains of Moslem glory. Bhurtpore also, the strong-hold of the Jauts, and Gwalior, a fort supposed to be impregnable until stormed and taken by a young British officer, the residence of Scindia, are within an easy journey ; together with Muttra and Bindrabund, the seats of Hindoo superstition, which possess several extremely curious and ancient temples. The profusion of marble, with which Agra abounds, has been brought from Oodipore, and the adjoining district of Bundelkhund has furnished its more precious stones.

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SCENES AND CHARACTERISTICS

OF

HINDOSTAN,

WITH

SKETCHES

OF

ANGLO-INDIAN SOCIETY.

BY EMMA ROBERTS,

AUTHOR OF

“Memoirs of the Rival Houses of York and Lancaster,” “Oriental Scenes,” &c. &c.

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SCENES AND CHARACTERISTICS

OF

HINDOSTAN.



CHAPTER I.

SHOPS AND SHOPPING.

THE attentions and flattery which ladies, who possess any claims to admiration, receive in India, must be exceedingly gratifying to those who are consoled by such homage for the loss, or rather the curtailment, of one of the most delightful recreations of the sex—namely, *shopping*. In many parts of the Upper Provinces, years may elapse without affording an opportunity for the purchase of a single European article, excepting by commission. Friends at some distant station must be applied to; and should the supply of goods not be very superabundant, the refuse of the *boor-wallah's* stores are rummaged over, and the purchaser must take what she can get, and be thankful.

Remote inland stations are very rarely visited by travelling merchants, who are afraid of incurring the expense of the conveyance of their goods upon an uncertainty, and thus trade is wholly confined to native dealers; a solitary *box-wallah* making his appearance occasionally, and asking upon his arrival such an extravagant price for his merchandize, as to render the purchase almost out of the question. Europeans are expected to pay exorbitantly for the products of their own country when the supply is scanty; and ladies have often the mortification of seeing an article, for which a very fair price has been refused, figuring on the person of one of their attendants, who has got it for next to nothing. Stations on the river are better supplied; few boats come up without bringing some small investment, by which the *dandies* (boatmen) hope to increase the profits of their voyage; and European shopkeepers frequently engage a *budgerow*, freighting the vessel with all sorts of articles for which there is any demand. Upon their arrival at the *ghat*, they send a catalogue round to the different resident families, with the prices affixed, and too frequently a tantalizing notice, "all sold," against the items most in request.

The joy with which the arrival of any long-desired object is hailed, of which the attainment was nearly hopeless, is great. Ladies' slippers, especially of European manufacture, which happen to fit, seem like a blessing sent from heaven, after having gone almost barefoot in the soft, ill-shaped, spongy-soled shoes, of native construction. Even Chinese Crispins, though they are by far the best to be found in India, and bear a very high reputation, do not supply their fair customers with those Cinderella-like shoes, which alone are fitted for delicate feet. The upper portion may be constructed of beautiful and appropriate materials, satin or prunella; but there is always a falling-off in the soles, which are made of leather not sufficiently tanned, while the heels are never properly stiffened. Native shoemakers succeed better with gentlemen's boots, &c., those from Europe soon becoming too hard to be wearable. The happiest efforts of Hoby must be discarded for a base imitation, which has the merit of being more comfortable and better suited to the climate. A wide street in Calcutta, called the Cossitollah, is almost filled with the shops of Chinese shoe-makers, who make satin slippers, to order, at four shillings a pair, and prunella or jean for three. It seems a thriving

trade, these operatives being always well dressed in the costume of their country, wearing upper garments of silk when they walk abroad, or repair to European houses to take orders and measures. Some of the native shoes are very handsome, but they can only be worn by foreign residents as slippers when in their dressing gowns; the heel, though it may be raised at pleasure, is laid down across the inner part of the sole; the points are peaked, and turned up; and the whole is stiffened with embroidery, beneath which a very small portion of the cloth or velvet composing the shoe is to be seen.

The only shops in Calcutta, which make much shew on the outside, are those of the chemists and druggists, who bring all the London passion for display to a foreign country; they exhibit splendid and appropriate fronts duly embellished with those crystal vases, in which gems of the most brilliant dye appear to be melted. They are flourishing concerns, and the establishment of manufactories of soda-water has added not a little to their profits. Until of late years, this refreshing beverage, which forms one of the greatest luxuries in a tropical climate, was imported from Europe and sold at a very high price; there is now a large establishment at Futtighur, which sends out supplies all over the country.

An officer, having a high command at the time that Java was taken from the Dutch, found a mineral spring upon the island of bright sparkling bubbling water, as delicious and refreshing as that which, when bottled and stamped with the seal of the Duke of Nassau, travels to every quarter of the globe. He instantly made the discovery known to the captain of a trader, who freighted his vessel with it for the Calcutta market, where it obtained a rapid sale; but it does not appear that any permanent advantage was derived from this event, or that the Dutch government were aware of the existence of this fountain, which springs in the midst of a thick forest, and is in all probability only the resort of the poor natives in its vicinity.

The European jewellers' shops in Calcutta are large and handsome; they do not make any shew on the outside, but the interiors are splendid; the pavement of one or two is of marble, and the glass-cases on the various counters display a tempting variety of glittering treasures—diamonds of the first water, pearls of price, with every precious stone that can be named in rich profusion. The setting of these gems is exceedingly beautiful, and according to the most fashionable patterns of London or Paris, neither of those places boasting a more su-

perb assortment ; but the prices are so ruinous, that it is wonderful where sufficient custom can be obtained to support establishments of the kind, of which there are at least four, in addition to the vast number of native artisans, who are not only exclusively employed by their own countrymen, but do a great deal of work for Europeans. Nothing could be more unconsoionable than the profits which English jewellers sought and obtained for their goods in those days in which wealth flowed into Calcutta from many sources now cut off. Hitherto the European shopkeepers of Calcutta have transacted business in the most arbitrary manner, according to their own devices, without any reference to the regulations of trade at home.* They have

* The jewellers, especially, set no bounds to the exorbitance of their demands. The counterpart of a gold smelling-bottle set with precious stones, which was sold in London for fifteen pounds, had the modest price of seventy affixed to it in Calcutta. A common chain of hair, with a locket attached to it, of the plainest description, was charged seven pounds ten ; not being executed according to order, it was sent back for alteration, and sixteen shillings added to the original bill, for the reparation of the blunders made by the workmen. A perfumer charged six shillings for an old bottle sent with a sample which was disapproved ; and whole pages might be filled with similar instances of the utter disdain of the recognized principles of trade exhibited by the shopkeepers of Calcutta.

had no competition to dread excepting with the natives, whose retail business, though extensive, has been carried on in a silent, unostentatious manner.

Formerly, an idea was entertained that European goods could only be obtained in perfection from European dealers; but this notion is now exploded, and it will be seen, in the course of these remarks, that the shopkeepers of both countries obtain their supplies from the self-same sources. It is the policy of Europeans to cast a stigma on their native competitors; for, living at an expensive rate, they are obliged to charge enormously for their commodities; while the humbler-minded native, whose whole establishment is maintained at a very small cost, is enabled to sell at a fair profit. In their anxiety to secure the genuine productions of Hoffman, or some other noted London house, families have sent to the accredited agents of these traders in Calcutta, paying of course the highest price, and have afterwards discovered that the vender, being out of the article, has kept the messenger waiting, while he despatched one of his own people to the bazaar, where it was to be had for about a fifth part of the money put down to their account.

Fortunes, however, are not accumulated in the rapid manner which might be surmised from the

immense profits thus obtained ; the goose is too often killed for the sake of its golden eggs, and customers are driven away in disgust by some piece of rapacity practised upon them. The princely style of living, also, affected by Calcutta shopkeepers, forms another drawback ; they spend nearly as much as they gain, there being little or no difference between the establishment of a first-rate tradesman and that of a civil servant. The modest few, who are content to occupy their houses of business, and who do not display close carriages and services of plate until they have realized sufficient capital for the indulgence of such luxuries, must inevitably acquire considerable wealth ; at least the opportunity has been offered under the old regime. But the stern necessity for retrenchment felt by so large a portion of the community, and the paralyzation of trade consequent on the late failures, together with the host of adventurers, which the alteration of the East-India Company's charter will in all probability send out, cannot fail to effect a striking change in the mercantile classes of Calcutta.

Next to the jewellers' shops, the most magnificent establishment in the city is that of the principal bookseller, Thacker & Co. ; there are others of

inferior note, which have circulating libraries attached to them ; but the splendid scale of this literary emporium, and the elegance of its arrangements, place it far above all its competitors. The profit obtained upon books is more moderate than that of any other European commodity, the retail prices being entirely regulated by those of the London market ; rupees are reckoned for shillings ; a book which is sold at the publishers at home for a pound, is charged at twenty rupees in Calcutta ; and, considering the cost of freight and insurance, the perishable nature of the commodity, and the very great care requisite to secure both leaves and binding from being injured by damp, or devoured by insects, the price cannot be considered high. Books intended for sale must be carefully taken down from the shelf and wiped every day, and not only the outside, but the interior also, must be examined ; a work of time which, in a large establishment, will occupy a great number of servants. The warping of splendid bindings in hot weather, and the rusts and mildews of the rainy season, must be taken into account ; while the white ants being no respectors of engravings, notwithstanding the greatest care, a *hiatus* will sometimes be visible in the centre of some superb specimen of art from the

burin of Finden, Heath, or others of equal celebrity. The most expensive standard works are always procurable at this establishment; and though it may be cheaper to literary clubs and book societies to import their own supplies from London, so much must be left to the discretion of the agent employed, and, in the trade, there is such great temptation to get rid of unsaleable volumes, that, in the end, little saving is effected.

Immense consignments of books sometimes come out to Calcutta, through different mercantile houses, which are sold by auction, and are often knocked down for a mere trifle. American editions of works of eminence also find their way into the market at a very cheap rate; and those who are content with bad paper, worse printing, and innumerable typographical errors, may furnish a library of the best authors at a small expense. The way in which a fashionable novel is got up is of little importance out of London, where an inelegant appearance would condemn the ablest production of the day; but in works of science, and those intended for the diffusion of useful knowledge, the mistakes and misprints, which are of constant occurrence in the American editions, may produce mischievous consequences. The inhabitants of Calcutta, or its

occasional residents, can alone be benefited by the shoal of books brought upon the coast by a fleet more than ordinarily freighted with literary merchandize. The supply at out-stations never is superabundant ; it is only in such places as Meerut and Cawnpore, that booksellers' shops are to be found, and their catalogues are exceedingly scanty, people generally preferring to send to Calcutta than to take the chance of what may be obtained from a shopkeeper, who has not sufficient custom to lay in an extensive stock. At the Cape of Good Hope, the beach is said sometimes to be literally strewn with novels ; an occurrence which takes place upon the wreck of a ship freighted from the warehouses of Paternoster Row ; and certainly, in the streets of Calcutta, those who run may read ; for books are thrust into the palanquin-doors, or the windows of a carriage, with the pertinacity of the Jews of London, by natives, who make a point of presenting the title-pages and the engravings upside down. Some of these books seem to be worthy of the Minerva press in its worst days ; and it is rather curious that novels, which are never heard of in England, half-bound in the common pale blue covers so long exploded, and which do not figure in any of the advertisements ostentatiously put forth on

the wrappers of magazines, &c., are hawked about in the highways and byeways of Calcutta; and, as they are not expressly intended for foreign markets, it must be presumed, though the fact appears doubtful, that there is some sale for them at home, and that "Mysterious Involvements," "Errors of the Imagination," and "Delicate Dilemmas," still find supporters amongst the twaddlers of both sexes.

Though the jewellers must be styled the ruination shops of Calcutta, the establishment of Messrs. Tulloh and Co. may be called the Howell and James of the city of palaces. It is seldom without a vast concourse of carriages at the door, and the attractions within are of a superior order. On the ground-floor, a large but by no means handsome hall is set apart for auctions; a pulpit is erected in the centre, and every description of property (houses, horses, carriages, &c. down to thimbles and needles) comes under the hammer in the course of a short time; sales of all kinds being very frequent. The auction-room is accessible to males alone; it is open to the entrance-hall, but should a lady wander by mistake into the forbidden precincts, she becomes the talk of Calcutta; it is an act of *grif-fnism*, which strikes the whole community with astonishment and horror. A broad flight of stairs

leads to a suite of apartments above, in which there is a multifarious assortment of merchandize, oddly enough contrasted, the merest trumpery being often placed in juxtaposition with articles of great value. The walls are hung with framed engravings, many of them from plates nearly worn out, intermixed with others of a superior description, and a few bad paintings; an accurate knowledge of the art being confined to a very small number of persons, and the worst specimens having as good a chance, especially with the natives, of procuring purchasers, as those of a higher order. The tables and counters are covered with glass cases, containing various kinds of British and foreign *bijouterie*; others support immense quantities of China and glass, lamps, lustres, and mirrors; there are quantities of silk mercery and linen drapery, and upholstery of all sorts. At one time, a tempting collection of furniture *en suite*, fitted for a boudoir, was displayed in these ware-rooms, which would have formed an appropriate decoration for the most *recherché* cabinet of the fairest queen in the world. It consisted of a work, sofa, and circular table, six chairs, and a couch of the beautiful black lacker, which even Chinese art cannot imitate. The landscapes were of the richest and most splendid enamel,

and the cushions and draperies of pale green damask. They had been made in Japan, to order, from drawings or models sent from Calcutta, and were therefore of the most fashionable and approved form.

The gentleman who had despatched this splendid commission did not live to see it completed, and it was consigned by his executors to Messrs. Tulloh and Co., to be sold for the benefit of the estate. Many bright eyes were directed towards these elegant decorations, although the circumstance of their not being of European manufacture lessened their value in the estimation of the greater number of gazers, who would have preferred glittering trumpery from France. The expense rendered a speculation for the English market rather hazardous; the price of each chair was four pounds, which, together with the freight and the *ad valorem* duty imposed at the Custom-house of London, would have rendered it too costly for a fair chance of profit. Stuffed Chinese birds, beautifully arranged in glass cases, are amongst the rarities of Messrs. Tulloh's emporium; these were reckoned cheap at fifty pounds a case, and in all probability found purchasers in the captains of trading-vessels. Native sircars, who speak English, attend to ac-

quaint the visitors with the different prices of the articles; but there are no chairs for the accommodation of the ladies, who in the hottest weather must either walk about, stand, or sink exhausted upon the stairs. Large consignments of goods, to be sold by auction upon some future day, are frequently exhibited; but ladies, however anxious they may be to become purchasers, are not permitted to select any of the lots at a fair price, although the sale may be so peremptory as to amount almost to giving them away. Such is the despotism of custom at Calcutta! Flaming advertisements, which put the ornate and elaborate productions of George Robins to shame, draw crowds of carriages to Tulloh's rooms; and great is the disappointment of the fair visitants, when, as it frequently happens, they see the old-remembered articles in their accustomed places, as well known as the Ochterlony monument, with as little chance of ever being removed from their site. No abatement whatever is made in the price, in consequence of the dilapidations which time may have occasioned; bargains are only to be procured at auctions, and the stock remains on hand during time immemorial, while newer and more fashionable importations, of the same nature, are knocked down

to the highest bidder for any thing they will fetch.

Mackenzie and Lyall, and Leyburn and Co., have establishments similar to that of Messrs. Tullohs, but neither so extensive nor so splendid. The sircars in attendance,—fine gentlemen, profusely arrayed in white muslin, and evidently fattening upon their profits,—assume a cavalier air, and seem to take any disparagement of their employers' goods in high dudgeon. Auction-rooms are attached to the premises of both these parties and the heads of all the establishments are expected to officiate in turn. This is a *sine quâ non*, and many gentlemen, who would otherwise have devoted their time and property to mercantile pursuits, have been prevented from entering into a partnership with these firms, in consequence of the unpleasant nature of the duties. According to the old system, an auctioneer, however respectable his connexions might be, and whatever his previous rank, was not admitted into society. The rigid exclusiveness of etiquette has somewhat relaxed in the present day, and military and civil servants do not object to meet at other houses, or receive at their own, those persons who were formerly considered to be quite beyond the pale. Still the

ascent of the rostrum is considered to entail the loss of caste; and it is supposed that the rigid enforcement of the rule is made to preserve equality amongst the partners of the establishment, who are or were all rendered equally unpresentable at the vice-regal court.

Besides the quantity of goods daily disposed of at auctions, there are vast accumulations, which seem to be utterly forgotten, in the *godowns*, or warehouses, belonging to every merchant. The terms applied to these receptacles is a corruption of the Malay word *Gadong*. The ransacking of the vaults and store-places of Calcutta, and the discovery of all the strange things which the rats and white-ants have left unconsumed, would be an amusing employment. What a quantity of forgotten lumber would see the light! Patent lever fids, and other vaunted inventions, equally at a discount, lie mouldering in these recesses with things of greater value and utility, crates of china and glass, hardware, perfumery, &c. &c. Perhaps, in no other place are there such numerous commodities put out of sight, and totally out of memory, as at Calcutta. The consignees who have failed to dispose of goods according to their invoice prices, and who have not received instructions to

sell them by auction, allow them to choke up their warehouses without an effort for their rescue from oblivion. All that is perishable is, of course, speedily demolished; a destiny little anticipated by the sanguine speculator, who perchance hoped to lay the foundation of his wealth in the Calcutta market.

Though this market is sometimes overstocked with the luxuries of the table, yet as the "eaters of ham and the eaters of jam," as the European community have been styled by a witty writer in the *Bengal Annual*, are insatiate in their demand for the sweet and savoury importations from oil, pickle, and confectionary-shops, they form the safest investment. Upon the arrival of a ship freighted with preserved salmon, lobsters, oysters, herrings, and other exotic fish; hams, reindeer-tongues, liqueurs, dried fruits, and a long list of foreign dainties, the wholesale purchaser, anxious to sell them in their freshest and purest state, usually puts forth a series of advertisements, in which the art of puffing is carried to its fullest extent. Nothing is too absurd to be printed in the Calcutta newspapers; the vauntings of Day and Martin must hide their diminished heads before those which figure in our eastern periodicals. Numerous pens are engaged

in the composition ; the young men in the “Buildings,” the grand patronizers of tiffins and suppers, frequently lending their assistance at a sounding paragraph, and encouraging the perpetration of divers execrable jokes, and familiar invitations in the worst taste imaginable. Cheese, in these shops, is sold for three shillings a-pound ; ham frequently at four, and every thing else in proportion.

Happily, the economical part of society may furnish their tables at a cheaper rate. The native bazaars of Calcutta, in which European goods are sold, though not very tempting in appearance, are well stocked. They consist of a collection of narrow streets, furnished with shops on either side, some of which have shew-rooms on the upper floor, but all darker, dirtier, and more slovenly than those in the fashionable quarters of the city. The *Soodagurs*, fat, sleek, well-dressed men, clad in white muslin, and having the mark of their caste (if Hindoos) painted in gold upon the forehead and down the nose, stand at their doors, inviting customers to enter. Capital bargains are to be obtained by those who are willing to encounter the heat, fatigue, and abominations which beset their path. It is not, however, necessary to inspect these districts in person, as a sircar may be em-

ployed, or samples of the goods sent for. The millinery exhibited in these places is absolutely startling, and people are puzzled to guess how it can ever be disposed of; but this mystery is solved by an apparition not unfrequent, a half (or rather whole) caste female,—for many of the Portuguese are blacker than the natives,—belonging to the lower ranks, attired in the European costume. No Christian of European descent, however remote, ever wears a native dress. Rich Indo-British ladies attire themselves in the latest and newest fashions of London and Paris, greatly to their disadvantage, since the Hindostanee costume is so much more becoming to the dark countenances and pliant figures of Eastern beauties: those of an inferior class content themselves with habiliments less in vogue, caring little about the date of their construction, provided the style be European. At native festivals, the wives of Portuguese drummers, and other functionaries of equal rank, are to be seen amid the crowd, arrayed in gowns of blue satin, or pink crape, fantastically trimmed; with satin slippers on their feet, their hair full-dressed, and an umbrella carried over their heads by some ragged servant, making altogether an appearance not very unlike that of Maid Marian on May-day.

To these ladies, in process of time, are consigned the blonde lace, or silver lama dresses, to which, on their first arrival in India, so exorbitant a price was affixed, that nobody could venture to become a purchaser. After displaying themselves for years in a glass case at Leyburn's, they suddenly disappeared, remaining in the deepest oblivion, until some lucky *box-wallah* procures a customer unacquainted with the changes which have taken place in the London fashions since the period of their *débüt* from the *boutique* of a first-rate professor.

Amidst an intolerable quantity of rubbish, articles of value may be picked out; the piece-goods are equal to those which are obtainable in magazines of higher pretensions, and the hams, cheeses, oil-man's stores, &c., are of the best quality; and furniture, palanquins, in short, all the necessities and conveniencies of life, are to be found at these bazaars. The shopkeepers are, for the most part, very rich native settlers in Calcutta, having derived more benefit from the increasing opulence of the city, than any other class of its inhabitants, since the greater part of the wealth flows through their hands. Having large capitals, they are enabled to purchase the whole of a captain's investments direct from the ship; the principal European establish-

ments do the same, putting about twenty per cent. upon the original price. Many of an inferior class, having no ready money, are obliged to go into the China bazaar, and buy from the natives (perhaps upon credit) those European commodities they are unable to procure at first-hand; yet these men live in the same style as the large capitalist, driving about in the streets in buggies, and disdaining the thrift and economy which their brethren at home are compelled to practise.

Under the British Government, the Mussulmans or Hindoos, who have accumulated property, are not afraid of making a display of it in their shops or warehouses; destitute of those apprehensions which, in the days of anarchy and despotism, embittered the enjoyment of riches, they pursue their avocations with a keenness and avidity which bid defiance to all rival efforts. Ready-money customers do well to make their purchases of persons willing to sell at a fair profit; but there is some danger of getting into debt, or borrowing largely from a Hindoo. The—Jews a class of persons with whom, in other places, pecuniary dealings are to be dreaded—form in Calcutta so small a portion of the community as scarcely to be worth naming. They have little chance against the sircars, banyans, and

money-changers professing Hindooism, whose usurious practices far exceed any thing related of the scattered tribes of Israel.

Shops at up-country stations, without being half so well supplied, are generally ten times dearer than those of Calcutta. Raspberry jam, the preserve most in request at an Indian table, bears a most preposterous price; a jar, which is sold in London for about four shillings, will cost twenty-four, and can never be purchased for less than sixteen. The charge at Cawnpore for half-a-pint of salad-oil is six shillings; and, in a camp, a two-pound square jar of pickles, and a pine cheese, have sold for three pounds each—an act of extravagance in the consumer which is without any excuse, the native pickles being infinitely superior to those brought from England, and the Hissar cheeses of far better quality than the importations, which are always either dry or rancid.

There are at least half-a-dozen French and English milliners of note settled in Calcutta, some of whom make regular voyages to Paris and London, for the purchase of their own investments. The displays of their shew-rooms materially depend upon the shipping arrivals; sometimes there is a “beggary account of empty boxes,” and at others

the different apartments are replete with temptations. The high rents of houses, in good situations, in Calcutta, and the necessity of keeping large establishments of servants, preclude the possibility of obtaining goods of any kind, at these fashionable marts, at low prices. The milliners of Calcutta seem to depend entirely upon supplies from Europe; they have never thought of enlisting Chinese manufactures into their service. Large importations of silks, satins, damasks, crapes, &c., arrive from Canton, and some of the higher orders of native merchants have pattern-books to shew, filled with the richest of these fabrics woven in the most exquisite patterns; but the ladies of Calcutta disdain to appear in dresses which would be eagerly coveted by those of the great capitals of Europe. Chinese silks and satins are scarcely to be seen in any of the shops; if they should be wanted, they must be sought out like the Cashmeres, the Dacca muslins, and the Benares tissues, concealed from public view in chests and warehouses. At half the expense of their present apparel, the Calcutta belles might be more splendidly attired than any female community in the world; but the rage for European frippery is so great, that the most magnificent fabrics of the East would have no chance

against a painted muslin. If these rich products were more seen, the purchase would be more highly appreciated; but the custom of the country, founded in all probability on the deleterious effects of the climate, forbids the outward shew which forms the characteristic, and the attraction also, of a London shop. The dampness of the atmosphere of Bengal is ruinous to every delicate article exposed to it; and the natives of India have not yet learned the methods by which careful English dealers preserve their stock from dust and dilapidation, nor can they acquire these arts from their European employers, who are in a great measure ignorant of the principles of trade, and are induced to become general dealers in consequence of finding it the most profitable speculation. The indolence occasioned by the heat is usually too great to admit of much personal superintendence; the details are left to native assistants, and, with very few exceptions, every kind of merchandize is huddled together in confusion, or arranged in the most tasteless manner.

The jewellers and the establishment of the leading bookseller have already been exempted from this charge, and the praise which their respective owners merit, must be awarded to the European

proprietors of a shop, the prettiest in Calcutta, devoted wholly to the sale of Chinese goods. There is a constant succession of new articles to be seen in this shop, captains of traders and people desirous of sending presents to England, speedily sweeping away the whole stock. The goods are charged at about double the price for which they may be purchased at Canton; but there are always many pretty things which come within the reach of humble purses, and the privilege of looking over some of the most beautiful specimens of human ingenuity is worth a few rupees. This shop, though not large, occupies a good situation upon the Esplanade; it is remarkably clean and cheerful, offering a striking contrast to the dens of dirt and darkness, which in many parts of the city look more like rat-holes than the emporiums of European goods. The door is generally thronged with carriages, and in the hot season there is some difficulty in getting up to it; the *garreewans*, or coachmen, of Calcutta, ignorant of the etiquette practised in England, do not draw off at the approach of another vehicle with a party to set down or take up. For want of some arrangement of this kind, there are perpetual contests for mastery; and timid people, or those who have a thin attendance of servants to clear the way,

prefer walking a few yards to disputing possession with the carriage at the door. In narrow passages, equipages are obliged to drive away to make room for each other; but where space will permit, it seems a point of honour amongst the coachmen to cause as much confusion and hubbub as possible. Every body drives on which side the road he pleases to take, either left or right; and, considering the vast number of carriages which assemble in the public places, it is wonderful how few accidents occur.

During the cold season, ladies may shop in Calcutta without any personal inconvenience, and many are not to be deterred by the heat from pursuing so favourite an amusement. The arrival of adventurers from France, who hire apartments for the display of their goods, is a great temptation to venture out; these people, who are anxious to get away again with the vessel which brought them, usually undersell the regular shopkeepers, disposing of the stock remaining on hand by public outcry, a favourite method all over India. Upon some of these occasions, amazing bargains are to be had, of which the natives usually avail themselves; boatmen and others upon the very smallest wages being enabled to make purchases, which they are

ing-saddle and bridle imported from England is twelve pounds, while those manufactured at Cawnpore may be had for one, equally good in appearance, though they probably will not last quite so long. The great demand for leather at Cawnpore has proved very fatal to troop-horses, and those of travellers proceeding to that station. The villages, at the distance of a march or two, are inhabited by gangs of miscreants, who do not hesitate to procure so lucrative an article of commerce by the most nefarious means. It is their custom to poison the wells, or otherwise to administer some deleterious mixture to the horses encamped in their neighbourhood. They either die immediately, or drop upon the road during their next day's march, and their skins are stripped off and sold at Cawnpore. It is seldom that a native of India can be detected in his knaveries. After many vain attempts to discover the perpetrators of these enormities, gentlemen who lost their horses came to a determination to defeat the projects of the wretches by whom they had been destroyed. Upon the death of any animal, they had it flayed instantly by their own people, and either carried away the skin or caused it to be burned upon the spot. This plan has at length proved effectual: the horse-killers, tired of their

vain attempts to secure the object of their villainy, allow the most tempting studs to pass unmolested, the *thanadars* in the neighbourhood having received orders to warn all travellers of the danger, and to recommend them, in the event of any casualty amongst their cattle, not to leave the skin behind. There is an exceedingly good English coach-maker settled at Cawnpore, and very excellent and elegant carriages are made at Bareilly, a place famous for the beauty of its household furniture, which is painted and lackered with much taste, and in a peculiar manner.

CHAPTER II.

GHAZEETPORE.

THE precious incense of the rose, the *atta-gool*, so celebrated throughout all the civilized parts of the world, is produced in considerable quantities in the gardens round Ghazeetpore. A paradise of roses conveys enchanting ideas of floral pomp and luxuriance to the mind. Fancy decks the scene with brilliant hues ;—parterres, where idle zephyrs wanton through the day ;—canopies, flinging their living tapestry of buds and interweaving leaves over banks and beds strewn with the blossoms which the sighing breeze has scattered. Sober reality, however, dispels these gay illusions ; the cultivation of roses at Ghazeetpore is a mere matter of business ; and the extensive fields, planted with the brightest ornament of the garden, do not invest the station with the attractions which are conjured up by a poetical imagination.

The Indian rose, though its very name seems to imply distinction, can only sustain a comparison

with its European sisters in the fragrance which it yields. It is beautiful, for could a rose be otherwise? but, excepting at Agra, it does not attain to the magnificent size common in England, nor does it present the infinite varieties which adorn our gardens. The cultivators of India are content to take what the hand of nature has given them, and resort to few artificial aids for the improvement of her lavish beauties: to a large majority, the rose appears to be too valuable a plant to be made the mere embellishment of a bouquet, and, for commercial purposes, that which they have found indigenous to the soil proves quite sufficient.

England is not the land of romance, but her hop-grounds are far more beautiful than the vine-wreathed vallies of France, or the rose-gardens which bloom in the East; unfortunately they are associated with breweries and ale-casks, and want the classic elegance which surrounds the bowl, brimmed with the red grape's ruby flood,—the lingering scent which clings round odours crushed, and makes them sweeter still. The rose of an English cottage, clambering from lattice to lattice, and mantling over the rustic porch in bright redundancy, is infinitely more attractive than its In-

dian namesake. We do not see the roses of Oriental climes spreading themselves over arches, or flinging down their crimson wealth in rich red clusters. They bloom sparingly upon a low shrub, which is kept to a dwarfish size by the gardener's knife, and the full-blown flowers being carefully gathered every morning, the trees rarely present the luxuriance of loaded boughs drooping beneath the weight of their silken treasures.

The roses of Ghazee-pore are planted formally, in large fields, occupying many hundred acres of the adjacent country. The flush of their flowers, when opening to the morning ray, and enamelling the verdant carpet of green spread over a sun-lit plain, cannot fail to delight the eye; but would afford far greater pleasure if diversified with bowers and labyrinths, trellises hung with garlands, and crimson clusters peeping between the luxuriant foliage wreathing over long arcades. If the voluptuous Moghuls ever celebrated a festival of roses in so appropriate a scene of their Indian conquests, no traces or memorials now remain to fill the spot with recollections of the Floral fête. The gathering of the flowers, either at its commencement or its close, is unaccompanied by those bright revels, which seem to be almost inseparable from a harvest

of roses. No gay troops of youths and maidens pile the glowing treasures in osier baskets, or wreath them round their brows. The work is performed, systematically, by a multitude of poor labourers, who, while carefully securing every full-blown flower, think of nothing except the *pice* which will repay their easy toil.

The first process which the roses undergo is that of distillation. They are put into the alembic with nearly double their weight of water. The *goo-lāābee pāānee* (rose-water) thus obtained is poured into large shallow vessels, which are exposed uncovered to the open air during the night. The *narnes*, or jars, are skimmed occasionally; the essential oil floating on the surface being the precious concentration of *aroma*, so highly prized by the worshippers of the rose. It takes 200,000 flowers to produce the weight of a rupee in *atta*. This small quantity, when pure and unadulterated with sandal-oil, sells upon the spot at 100 rupees (£10): an enormous price, which, it is said, does not yield very large profits. A civilian, having made the experiment, found that the rent of land producing the above-named quantity of *atta*, and the purchase of utensils, alone, came to £5; to this sum the hire of labourers remained still to be

added, to say nothing of the risk of an unproductive season.

The Damascus, or rose of Sharon, is the flower in most esteem in some parts of India; in others, the common cabbage, or hundred leaved rose is the favourite. The oil produced by the above-mentioned process is not always of the same colour, being sometimes green, sometimes bright amber, and frequently of a reddish hue. When skimmed, the produce is carefully bottled, each vessel being hermetically sealed with wax; and the bottles are then exposed to the strongest heat of the sun during several days.

Young ladies in England, who spend the rosy months of June and July in the country, and who can command a hot-house where the thermometer rises to 100° or 120°, might try the experiment of manufacturing *atta*: 200,000 roses could easily be obtained by levying contributions upon friends and neighbours; and from the rose-water they would yield, poured into China vases, and placed amongst the pine-apples, delicate hands might be employed to extract the floating essence.

Rose-water which has been skimmed is reckoned inferior to that which retains its essential oil, and is sold at Ghazee-pore at a lower price; though,

according to the opinion of many persons, there is scarcely, if any, perceptible difference in the quality. A *seer* (a full quart) of the best may be obtained for eight *annas* (about 1s.). Rose-water enters into almost every part of the domestic economy of the natives of India: it is used for ablutions, in medicine, and in cookery. Before the abolition of *nussurs* (presents), it made a part of the offerings of persons who were not rich enough to load the trays with gifts of greater value. It is poured over the hands after meals; and at the festival of the *Hoolee*, all the guests are profusely sprinkled with it. Europeans, suffering under attacks of prickly heat, find the use of rose-water a great alleviation. Natives take it internally for all sorts of complaints; they consider it to be the sovereignest thing on earth for an inward bruise, and *eau de Cologne* cannot be more popular in France than the *goolāābes pāānees* in India. Rose-water, also, when bottled, is exposed to the sun for a fortnight at least.

The environs of Ghazee-pore are exceedingly pretty, planted with fine forest trees, which may be supposed to bear the nests of the *bulbul*, haunting the gardens of the rose; though, whether the nightingales of the East are found in this district

I cannot vouch with any degree of certainty, having only heard and seen those divine warblers in cages. Birds, however, abound; the branches are loaded with the pendulous nests of the crested sparrow, and the blue jay sports in dangerous proximity to the Ganges, being selected at a barbarous Hindoo festival as a victim to the cruel Doorga. At the annual celebration of her inhuman rites, these beautiful birds are thrown into the river; and though sometimes rescued by Europeans, who do not share in the superstition that it is unlucky to intermeddle with the vengeful goddess's offerings, they seldom survive the immersion. There are some fine old banian-trees in the neighbourhood of Ghazeetown; one, in particular, which overshadows a *ghaut* in an adjacent village, may be styled the monarch of the Ganges. This tree, as well as the peepul, is sacred; and when a Brahmin takes up his abode under its boughs, it becomes an asylum for all sorts of animals: the fine old patriarch of the woods near Ghazeetown is the haunt of innumerable monkies, which actually crowd the branches, and gambol along the steps of the *ghaut*, perch upon its balustrades, and play their antics with the bathers in perfect security, and in multitudes which remind the gazer of rabbits in a warren.

Snakes are very numerous in this part of the country, and their deadly enemy the mongoose is frequently seen on the watch for the victims which he pursues with unrelenting animosity. Both natives and Europeans, who have witnessed the encounters of these extraordinary animals with venomous reptiles, are convinced that the mongoose is acquainted with an antidote to the poison, which medical men of the highest eminence have pronounced to be mortal, refusing, in many instances, to yield to the strongest repellent known (*eau de luce*) a remedy sometimes administered with success. It is certain that the mongoose frequently receives very severe bites in its conflicts with the snake; that after being wounded it is seen to retire, as it is supposed for the purpose of applying the antidote, and that it will return again to the charge with unflinching vigour, never relinquishing the fight until it has succeeded in destroying its opponent. The mongoose is often domesticated as a pet, for the purpose of keeping houses free from snakes; and thus amateurs have constant opportunities of witnessing its combats with the cobra de capello. Its movements are so exceedingly rapid, that no one has yet been able to follow it to the plant which yields the specific; and scientific men

have not hitherto thought it worth their while to ascertain this interesting point by a series of experiments.

Ghazepore is the quarter of a King's regiment of infantry, and is reckoned a very desirable station, on account of the easy nature of the duties, and the healthiness of the climate. In times of peace, upon the landing of European corps of foot soldiers, it has usually been the custom to allow them to make the tour of the provinces by slow degrees, resting, during intervals of two or three years, either at Berhampore, or Boglipore, on their way to Dinapore, Ghazepore, Cawnpore, and Meerut. This practice, however, has been departed from in the case of the 26th regiment, which, almost immediately after its arrival at Fort William, was marched up to Kurnaul, a frontier station on the distant borders of the Company's territories. The Upper Provinces being considered infinitely more healthy than the low plains of Bengal, it would be advisable, if not interfering with the welfare of the service, to send King's corps into the interior at the first season in which it would be practicable to perform a long march. The process of acclimation is attended with a melancholy catalogue of deaths, when it is carried on in the damp

districts near the presidency. Though Dinapore has the advantage of a dry sandy soil, cholera is no stranger to its cantonments; and it is not until the arrival of a regiment of Europeans at Ghazee-pore, that much hope can be entertained of clean bills of health in the medical report.

King's troops are very expensive appendages to the Company's territories; the care and attention necessary for the preservation of their lives, generally has the effect of unfitting them for the duties which a soldier is called upon to perform in a colder climate; while, in despite of the pains taken to ensure their health and comfort, their existence in India must be far less pleasurable than a life of toil and hardship under a more genial atmosphere. During many months, European soldiers are doomed to spend their whole time in imprisonment and idleness; their parades take place very early in the morning, and after the daily exercise is over, they must confine themselves to their barracks. They are strictly enjoined not to proceed to the bungalows of their officers upon duty, in the heat of the sun; without an umbrella, and it is no uncommon sight to meet a private with a black attendant carrying a *chattah* (awning) over his head. The penny literature of the day would be

invaluable, could it reach the stations of European soldiers in India with the regularity and cheapness of its production in England, for reading is their grand resource. Happy are those who find in the Bible every book they need ! Religious exercises form the consolation and the occupation of many ; but there is still a very large majority who require other aids to fill up their time. Books are, unfortunately, rather a scarce commodity, and notwithstanding the establishment of regular libraries, want of funds renders the supply inadequate to the demand.

Commanding officers have usually the good sense to encourage, or at least to sanction, intellectual amusements. In many places, the soldiers have been permitted to construct a theatre for their own performances, and at others they are allowed the use of that belonging to the station. The prices of admission are generally sufficient to cover the expenses, though in India, as well as in England, dramatic speculations are often found to be losing concerns, and scarcely any manager or managing committee can contrive to keep out of debt. Infinite pains are taken to divest theatrical amusements of the danger which might arise from love-scenes between married women and gay Lo-

tharios. The soldiers' wives are not permitted to enact the heroines in dramatic entertainments, lest it should lead to deviations from the path of duty ; and when female characters cannot be cut out, they are performed by beardless youths, much to the deterioration of the spectacle, although the principle which deprives the Mofussil stage of feminine attraction cannot be too highly commended.

A theatre affords interesting occupation to numbers of poor exiled soldiers, who would otherwise be devoured with *ennui*. Those who can handle a brush are employed in painting the scenes ; less accomplished amateurs are too happy to be allowed to shift them ; and the orchestra is open to musical aspirants, the Orphii of the Mofussil, who, maugre the disadvantages of instruments which will not keep a single instant in tune, beguile many weary hours with the practice necessary for a grand display. Petting animals also offers a pleasing source of employment to a soldier ; great varieties of parrots, highly accomplished in the vulgar tongue, are to be found in the barracks, and the master frequently becomes too much attached to a docile and apt scholar to part with it, though tempted by a high price : twenty rupees (£2) being usually given for a well-taught bird. Constant attention

and untiring patience are necessary for the instruction of the feathered race ; and as the organ of speech is much more strongly developed in the skulls of some paroquets than in those of others, an acquaintance with phrenology would save an infinity of labour. The parrot's cage is hung in some dark place, not unfrequently down a well, while the tutor, lying on the brink, repeats the same sentence over and over again for an hour together. The education of parrots on the continent of India is almost wholly confined to Europeans ; though they are frequently kept in a state of captivity by the natives, and are objects of veneration to some castes of Hindoos, they are rarely if ever taught to speak by them. All their cares appear to be lavished upon the hill mynahs, beautiful large black birds with a yellow mark on each side of the head, which are easily trained to the performance of a variety of amusing tricks, and turn out far better orators than the paroquets.

That pining after home, which, in hearts endued with sensibility, too often sows the seeds of disease and death, is acutely felt by a large portion of the King's soldiers, whose terms of service in India being seldom less than twenty years, nearly amounts to a sentence of perpetual banishment. Excepting

during a war, when hardships, however severe, are rendered endurable by the spirit-stirring incidents attendant on a hot campaign ; destitute of all excitement, bold and hardy men drag out a life of inglorious ease, in a completely artificial state of existence, preserved, as it were, in glass cases for times of need. Their society at all periods is exclusively military ; they have no communication, as at home, with their fellow-citizens ; no jovial meetings with strange faces in public-houses ; no large assemblages of persons belonging to their own class at fairs and festivals. Their wants are carefully attended to, but their enjoyments are few ; beer is a luxury which their purses can rarely command ; they have not many opportunities of forming matrimonial connexions with people of their own colour, and life must be irksome to all who cannot give themselves up to sedentary employments. Long habit lends its aid to the subduing influence of the climate to reconcile the greater number of European soldiers to this state of vegetation ; they are conscious that a protracted residence in India has rendered them unequal to the performance of military duties elsewhere ; and when, at length, a regiment receives orders to embark for England, numerous volunteers are found willing to

remain in the country in which they have worn out the fairest portion of their existence. The ties which bound them to their native land have all been severed ; the fond hopes which they cherished of an early return, laden with the spoils of conquered rajahs, have melted away, and they are content at last to relinquish the fair visions of home and happiness, for the solid provision which can be attained in India. These are usually steady men, of sober views and habits, who have outlived the illusions of their youth, and are satisfied to have a choice of minor evils. Warmer temperaments indulge more vivid expectations ; to them the name of *home* acts like a spell ; painful experience has not yet taught them to anticipate disappointment, and they return with the same bright hopes which led them gladly to seek a land whose splendid promises remain unfulfilled. A few, driven to despair by the melancholy prospect of interminable exile, unable to await the slow approach of their recall, and allured by the flowery descriptions of Australia, plunge into crime for the purpose of exchanging honourable servitude in India for a felon's lot in a climate resembling that of England. It is no very unusual circumstance for a soldier to attempt the life of his officer or his comrade, in the

hope of being transported to a country possessing so many features akin to the land of his birth; and even the punishment of death is to some less terrible than the prospect of eternal banishment from "the home they left with little pain."

In no other country in the world can the wives and children of European soldiers enjoy the comfort and happiness which await them in India. The lot of the latter is peculiarly fortunate, for they have no reminiscences of another land to poison the blessings of competence and freedom from the pressure of early cares; schools are established in every regiment for the instruction of children of both sexes. The education of persons belonging to their class in society, can be carried on as well in India as in England: they are taught to make themselves useful; the boys with a view of becoming non-commissioned officers, regimental clerks, &c.; the girls to be made industrious servants, and fitting wives for men in a rank rather superior to that from which they themselves have sprung. The clergy take great delight in the instruction of the youthful members of their respective flocks, and they form the most numerous and the most interesting candidates for confirmation at the visits of the Bishop of Calcutta to the distant scenes of

his vast diocese. European ladies gladly take the females into service at an early age, and if they do not retain their situations long, it is because they are eagerly sought in marriage by their fathers' comrades, or by shopkeepers who chance to be located in their vicinity. The daughters of dragoon soldiers sometimes aspire to be belles; they copy the fashions brought out by new arrivals of a higher class, and do great execution at the balls, which upon grand occasions are given by the *élite* of the non-commissioned officers of the corps.

The wives of soldiers in India are secured from all those laborious toils and continual hardships to which they must submit in countries where the pay of their husbands is inadequate to their support. If sober and industrious, they may easily accumulate a little hoard for the comfort of their declining years. Acquaintance with any useful art, dress-making, feather-cleaning, lace-mending, washing silk stockings, or the like, may be converted into very lucrative employments; and the enormous wages demanded by European women, when they go into service as ladies'-maids, or wet nurses (from fifty to a hundred rupees per month), shews how indifferent they are to the means of acquiring money by personal exertion. Few officers' wives attached

to King's corps can afford to have a white female attendant; and the unaccustomed luxuries which these women enjoy, when domesticated in wealthy families, unfortunately, in too many instances, are apt to render them so lazy, insolent, and overbearing, as to be perfectly intolerable; and consequently it is not often that they are to be found out of the barracks.

Soldiers are not in England very scrupulous in the choice of their wives, and amid the numbers who come out to India, a very small proportion remain uncorrupted by bad example and the deteriorating influence of campaigns and long voyages. It is not absolutely necessary that they should undertake any thing beyond the care of their own family, and many prefer idleness to the slightest exertion. They and their children have regular rations served out for their daily food; while the regiment is upon a march, they are provided with suitable conveyances; during the hot winds, their quarters are supplied with *tatties*; and in passing along the lines *punkahs* may be seen swinging in the serjeants' barrack-rooms, and curious scenes are displayed to view through the open doors. Some fat and unshapeable lady, attired in a loose white gown, indulging in a siesta

in an elbow-chair, with a native attendant, ragged and in wretched case, who, fan in hand, agitates the air around her.

To those Anglo-Indians who cherish vivid recollections of home, and who delight in all things which recall their native country to their mind, it is exceedingly gratifying to be stationed in the vicinity of a King's regiment or a European corps in the service of the Company. After a long absence from England, and long association with persons of education, the homely provincial accents of some untaught soldier come in music on the ear, bringing with them a rush of painfully-pleasing emotions; recalling past scenes and past days, "awakening thoughts which long have slept," restoring youth, hope, health, and happiness, for a brief delightful period. Experience alone can tell how sad, and yet how dear, are the first meetings with country people of an inferior class in the jungles of India. A detachment of artillery, passing through a small out-post, whose European inhabitants did not exceed a dozen persons, occasioned a burst of anguish, which revealed to a pining exile the full extent of that home-sickness which had preyed in secret on her mind. Returning from an evening walk, a soldier's wife

crossed the path, and at first, rejoicing to meet a countrywoman, the lady eagerly stepped forward and accosted her ; but no sooner did the familiar sounds of by-gone days strike upon her heart, than she burst into a flood of tears. Aware that the person who had caused this violent emotion would be quite unconscious of the effect which her homely speech had produced, she stifled her feelings, and, inviting the poor woman to come to the bungalow, hastened onward to order out the contents of the larder to form a little feast for her comrades in the camp ; but she dared not trust herself beyond a few simple questions, and, unwilling to make a display of sensibility which might be misconstrued, and could not be understood, she did not indulge in the pensive gratification which a protracted interview would have afforded. When accustomed to see and converse with the lower order of Europeans, the keenness of the emotions produced by the reminiscences which they call up subsides, and the feelings they create are wholly of a pleasurable nature. The evening drive is rendered doubly gratifying by the groups of healthy-looking, tidily-dressed English children, at play in front of their quarters, or bending their way in the train of their parents along the road, upon a Sunday evening, to

the church, whose tinkling bell charms the ear as in days of old, when the peal from a village spire filled the heart to overflowing with delightful sensations.

Though destitute of the rich red roses, which bloom so freshly on the cheeks of youthful cottagers in England, the sickliness and delicacy, so strikingly apparent in the petted and carefully-attended offspring of the higher order, are rarely the characteristic of soldiers' children, who seem to preserve their strength and vigour in a climate considered to be exceedingly detrimental to the juvenile classes of Europeans. The mortality amongst the infants of this grade is not so great as might be expected : where their mothers have been unable to suckle them, and where the expense of a native nurse could not be incurred, a goat has performed the maternal office with infinite success, the little creatures thriving under the nourishment afforded by this humble animal ; nor is it so usual to droop and pine away at the period in which change of climate is so earnestly recommended to the children of the rich ; numbers of fine young men and women grow up to maturity without having tasted a colder air than that which blows in Hindostan.

The station-duties are performed at Ghazee-pore by two or three companies of a native regiment, detached from Benares, sepoy's standing sentinel at the hospital, store-houses, and at all places where the heat is considered to be injurious to European constitutions. There are a few staff-appointments held by officers of the Company's service, and the society receives a very agreeable addition from the families of several indigo-planters residing in the neighbourhood.

It is always a fortunate circumstance when the higher class of Anglo-Indian cultivators are settled in the vicinity of an European cantonment, since there are no set of persons who exercise more boundless hospitality, or from whom travellers receive more cordial kindness. Those with whom it would not be desirable to associate form a very small portion. The greater number of the country-born, or Eurasians, many of whom shew complexions still darker than that of the natives, are, generally speaking, intelligent, well-informed men, ever ready to contribute to any proposed amusement, and opening their doors readily at all times for the reception of guests; while those Europeans who have embarked in indigo speculations are usually of a very high order of intellect.

Although no rank is recognized in India, excepting that which is held by the civil and military servants of the Company, much to the credit of the society, there are no invidious distinctions made between the persons who compose it. Individuals who are gifted with pleasing manners and accomplishments will always receive the respect and attention due to their merits ; little or no regard is paid to colour or to circumstances, where there are personal claims to the notice of those more highly endowed with the gifts of birth and fortune. Fine houses, fine equipages, and fine entertainments, though they may render individuals popular who have little else to recommend them, are not, as in England, essentially requisite to obtain a passport into good society. It is sufficient that the party shall have the *entré* of government-house, the grand test of gentility in India ; but even ineligibility in this particular does not, amid liberal-minded people, form an insurmountable barrier ; many families, both in the Mofussil and in Calcutta, being received in society, whose occupation and calling must exclude them from the vice-regal court.

The India Company have a stud for the breed of horses in the vicinity of Ghazee pore, under the

superintendence of European officers peculiarly qualified for the appointment. The cattle which they turn out, though inferior in beauty to English and Arab chargers, are extremely useful, particularly for harness; a stud-bred horse with a good pedigree is a valuable animal, and always obtains a fair price, though considerably lower than that which would be demanded for a horse of equal merit in England. The common country breed, though it is said that they possess more blood than any other horses in the world, are so unseemly in their appearance and so unconquerably vicious in their habits, that they are rarely used, except upon some great emergence, by European officers. There are, however, some very handsome animals brought from distant parts of India, and others, especially those from Cutch, which are more curious than beautiful, but which prove hard-working useful roadsters, better fitted for the climate than those of English parentage, which are very soon knocked up, and are consequently taken the utmost care of.

From Calcutta to Barrackpore, a distance of sixteen miles, carriage-horses are always changed midway; and as none are kept for posting, a pair must be sent on the day before. Medical men, or

those who spend a good deal of their time in visiting, cannot take out the same horses in the evening which they have used in the morning; and it is one of the objections to Cawnpore, that officers who have only one buggy-horse, are unable to take their wives to the course in the evening, because it has been driven a long distance during the day to some court-martial or committee sitting at the extremity of the cantonments, which straggle along a space of five miles in length. Notwithstanding the care and attention paid to horses in India, the luxury of a stable is often of necessity denied them. When out in the field, or during long marches, they are picqueted under trees, the only covering which they or their *syces* have to protect them from the inclemency of the weather being a blanket; unless the grooms are liberally supplied with horse-cloths, they are too apt to make themselves comfortable at the expense of their charge; and it is therefore the best economy to provide sufficient clothing for man and horse.

An Indian *syce* is generally exceedingly attached to the animal under his care; it is no uncommon circumstance for gentlemen travelling by a different route to entrust their most valuable chargers to the sole guardianship of their grooms, who proceed

alone, though jungley districts, seldom if ever mounting the animals, which are led by their conductors, and which arrive at the place of their destination, at the end of two or three months, according to the distance, in excellent condition. Sometimes the *syce* is taken ill upon the road, in which event he will drag himself with difficulty to the next European station, and deliver up the horse to the care of some English gentleman, who, if the poor man's case should be desperate, will hire a new groom, and send him on with his charge, well assured that he will perform the duties of the service with fidelity and despatch. Instances of horses being lost or injured upon long journies of this nature, if known, are so exceedingly rare, that they cannot be adduced in prejudice of the national character, which, in the faithful discharge of the trust reposed in the humblest individuals, is unrivalled. Sepoys despatched upon treasure-parties, if surprised and outnumbered by bands of armed robbers, will make a desperate though hopeless resistance, and suffer themselves to be cut to pieces to a man rather than desert their posts, although retreat under the circumstances could not be considered dishonourable.

There is scarcely a servant in any establishment

who could not, if he pleased, make himself master of what would be wealth to him ; for there are very few things which are not left open and at the mercy of the domestics, who have many facilities for escape beyond the reach of justice : but it is seldom that the poorest and lowest abuse their employer's confidence ; nothing but ill-treatment, and, in many cases, not even that, will induce a servant to rob his master ; frequently the whole household will abscond in the night, but they do not often carry any thing away with them, though there may be arrears of wages due, which they dare not return to claim. Yet, notwithstanding facts of this nature, which are notorious, and the unlimited confidence which the greater number of Europeans repose in their servants, no set of persons are more calumniated or reviled. There are certain perquisites to which they think themselves entitled, and which, if they are not very sharply looked after, they will appropriate ; but, excepting where great carelessness and extravagance on the part of the heads of houses encourage similar waste in their inferiors, their peculations are very trifling, and by no means deserve to be designated by the opprobrious terms which people, unaccustomed to the tricks and frauds practised by European

domestics, are wont to use in descanting upon the knaveries of those of India. Were the same power to be placed in the humble classes of England, it would be much more frequently abused ; but persons who have come out young and inexperienced to India, and who, in too many instances, entertain a prejudice against the colour of those with whom they are surrounded, are apt to fancy excellencies and perfections in servants at home, which only exist in their own imaginations : a truth of which, upon their return to Europe, they are soon painfully convinced.

Extraordinary examples of honesty are of perpetual occurrence in India ; large sums of money, accidentally left upon tables, have been carefully secured by the first servant who espied them, and produced without any ostentation, as a matter of course, at the owner's return. The sirdar-bearer has usually the care of his master's purse, and when these men are judiciously selected, they may be entrusted with untold gold. The poorest class of labourers, *coolies*, are often employed to convey a box or parcel, containing valuable property, from Calcutta to the Upper Provinces, receiving an advance of pay at the period of their setting out, as they have no means of maintaining themselves

upon the road; fifteen or twenty rupees, if the journey be a long one, are often given for this purpose, and always without the slightest danger of the sum being misapplied. Nothing could be more easy than the appropriation of box and money to the use of the person who carries his load over many weary miles for scanty pay, and who, by diverging into a neighbouring district, might defy the pursuit of justice; but such things never occur; the only danger to be apprehended is the murder of the *ooly* by those prowling bands of robbers by profession which infest every part of Hindostan.

Ghazee-pore is notorious for its thieves, many of whom pursue their vocation under a religious character, and in the garb of *gosseins* (devout beggars) inveigle their victims to their pagodas, where they assassinate them at leisure. Dacoits of a less atrocious description abound, and no travellers can escape their depredations, unless they consent to entertain one or two *chokeydars* during their halt, a set of gentry who act a double part, and are thieves when they are not watchmen. The vigilance and zeal of these guardians of the night are manifested by loud and incessant cries of *khaubba daur!* 'Take care!' When they do not

sleep themselves, they seem determined not to allow any persons to close their eyes who happen to be within hearing. Every quarter-of-an-hour the warning is repeated, with a strength of lungs which effectually precludes the hope that the Stentorian voice may fail, and quiet be restored.

The native city of Ghazee-pore is better built and better kept than many other places of more importance. The bazaars are neat, well-supplied, and famous for their tailors, whose excellent workmanship is celebrated in the adjacent districts. A very considerable number of the inhabitants are Moosulmans, though the neighbouring population is chiefly Hindoo; their mosques are numerous and handsome, and their former grandeur is evinced by a superb palace built by the Nawāb Cossim Ali Khan, which occupies a considerable extent of ground overlooking the Ganges. This noble building is now in a melancholy state of dilapidation, neglected by the government, who have turned it into a custom-house, and have converted many of its suites of apartments into warehouses, and the residences of police *peons* belonging to the guard. Though thus rendered useful, it is not thought worthy of repair; its splendid banqueting-hall and cool verandahs, replete with architectural

beauty, abutting into the river, are deserted and left to the swift devastations of the climate. In a very short period, the whole of this magnificent fabric will become a heap of ruins, and then some mean and tasteless edifice will be erected in its place. The great dislike which Europeans entertain to a residence within the precincts of a native city has probably prevented the civilians attached to Ghazee-pore from selecting this palace for their abode. It might, however, be rendered subservient to some public purpose, and could be put into repair at a small expense by men zealously desirous to preserve so interesting a relic, as the workmen would be furnished from the neighbouring prison.

The place of confinement for felons of all descriptions at Ghazee-pore is large, strong, airy, and commodious, and usually crowded with delinquents of all castes and denominations: refractory Mosulmans incarcerated for various offences, and fanatical Hindoos, whose crimes are in most instances connected with their religion. Not content with starving themselves to death, in order to revenge themselves upon their adversaries in another world, they are sometimes known to murder a member of their own family, in the belief that the blood of the victim

will rest upon the heads of their adversaries. A memorable illustration of this notion occurred at Ghazee-pore, where an old man, who conceived that he had a right to a piece of land which had been adjudged to his neighbour, brought his wife to the spot, an elderly personage, who could be easily spared, and forcing her, with the assistance of his friends and relations, into a hut made of straw, set it on fire, and burned her to death, in the expectation that the soil would be accursed and refuse to yield its fruits to the enemy who had triumphed over him.

The punishment of death is not often adjudged by the criminal courts to the natives of India. The law by which they are tried renders it very difficult to prove murders, however openly committed; and the usual sentence is hard labour upon the roads during a certain number of years, or for life, according to the enormity of the crime. The convicts work in irons, and are sometimes employed in weeding the paths round the houses of people of distinction.

A stranger seated in a drawing-room of an officer of very high rank was much amazed by the "*qui hi? punkah tannah!*" ('who waits? pull the *punkah*,') being answered by a felon, fettered and

manacled, who, with the utmost coolness squatted down upon the floor, applied himself to the rope, and pulled away vigorously, his chains clanking in harmony all the time. Such an exhibition did not seem to strike the family as any thing extraordinary; they appeared to think that, provided the *punkah* was set in motion, the character and condition of the operator were of very little consequence: a proof amongst many others of the utter disregard of consistency manifested in an Anglo-Indian establishment.

In visiting persons of consequence in the Mofussil, travellers in their *griffinage* are exceedingly astonished by the appearance of the verandahs leading to apartments furnished with costliness and taste, they being generally made to resemble old clothes'-shops, or pawnbrokers'-stalls; servants and sepoy's of the guard are usually permitted to hang up their garments upon the pillars and bamboos, and to spread their beds under the awning. More attention is paid to appearances in Calcutta; but the basement-story of many of the houses frequently exhibits symptoms of carelessness and neglect; choked up with unseemly articles, which native servants never deem to be out of place in the most conspicuous situations.

The houses of the civilians attached to Ghazeepore are spacious and well-built, surrounded by good gardens, and occupying picturesque situations, amid tame but luxuriant scenery; where the green lanes, flowering hedge-rows, and receding glades bring the most cultivated portions of England to mind. The bungalows of the military residents are frightful; the huge thatched roofs, common to such edifices, being exchanged for still more ugly tiles of glaring red. They are fortunately well sheltered and somewhat concealed by intervening trees, and the interiors are commodious though overrun with rats and mice, which few of the European residents are at the trouble to destroy, notwithstanding the dirt they engender and the havoc which they commit in wardrobes, larders, and furniture. It is not difficult to exterminate this sort of vermin; but Indian servants, if not enjoined to keep the houses clean, will allow them to swarm in every apartment, and habit reconciles many persons to the intrusion. Those who entertain a disgust to such unclean animals are most cruelly annoyed by the multitudes which approach them whenever they pay their visits to friends.

The races of Ghazeepore are some of the best in India, and attract sporting characters from all the

adjacent provinces ; the horses are superior to those started for mere amusement by less ambitious members of the turf at other stations, and are frequently the subject of heavy bets. Commodious stables have been erected, which are occupied by the favourites, and the result of each meeting excites very general interest all over the country. The annual fair at Hadjeepore, held at an inconsiderable distance, and the occasional visits of families from Mirzapore, Chunar, Buxar, Sultaspore, and Benares, places situated within an easy journey, render GhazEEPore a very lively residence. The military cantonments are honoured by retaining the mortal remains of a soldier, eminent for the conquest of some of the fairest portions of the Honourable Company's territories, the great Cornwallis, who, after his glorious exploits upon the other side of India, died during a journey from the Upper Provinces, and is buried near the parade-ground of GhazEEPore. The mausoleum, which has been raised over his dust, is little worthy of the magnificent spirit which sleeps beneath ; and shews to great disadvantage after a visit to the Moosulman tombs so profusely scattered over the neighbouring plains. The architects disdained to take a hint from the chaste and beautiful specimens

of monumental remains which the country affords, and have erected a nondescript building, at a great expense, after a model of the far-famed sybil's temple ; but deformed by mean pillars and a cumbersome attic story disproportioned to its support. It is built of excellent materials, free-stone, which promises great durability ; and the dome, which, though it has been compared to the cover of a pepper-pot, is the best part of it, makes a good appearance from the river, and will look still better when shadowed by the trees which are planted in the back-ground. The mausoleum forms a point of attraction to the station ; the military band, always an appendage to a King's regiment, plays near it of an evening, and the whole population of the different lines come forth in carriages, on horse-back, or on foot, to enjoy the fresh cool breezes and the society of their acquaintance. A few European shopkeepers are settled at Ghazeetopre, which is well supplied with foreign and native products ; the sugar-cane is extensively cultivated in the district, but its manufacture is not so celebrated as at Kalpee on the Jumna, where the natives produce immense quantities of the finest descriptions. The best kind of sugar in India is crystallized, and sold in the shape of baskets, some-

what resembling those made of alum, which are constructed by ingenious young ladies in England. These have a pretty appearance when placed upon a tray, and always form a portion of the presents composed of dried fruits and sweetmeats.

CHAPTER III.

GOVERNMENT-HOUSE, CALCUTTA.

BISHOP HEBER, in speaking of the vice-regal palace of Calcutta, says, that it has narrowly missed being a noble structure ; persons of less refined, or as some would call it less fastidious taste, do not concur in this censure, or admit that the architectural blunders, of which the critic complains, have had an injurious effect upon the appearance of the building. It is altogether, whatever may be the fault of its details, a splendid pile ; and, standing isolated on the Calcutta side of the large open plain, which forms so magnificent a quadrangle opposite Chowringee, it is seen to the greatest advantage from every point, being sufficiently connected with the city to shew that it belongs to it, yet unencumbered and not shut out by any of the adjacent buildings. It consists of two semicircular galleries, placed back to back, uniting in the centre in a large hall, and connecting four splendid suites of apartments. “ Its columns, how-

ever," observes the Bishop, "are in a paltry style; and instead of having, as it might have had, two noble stories and a basement, it has three stories, all too low, and is too much pierced with windows on every side."

Somewhat of effect was probably sacrificed to convenience and the accommodation necessary for the establishment of the Governor-general; but the great objection to it as an Asiatic residence, which does not appear to have struck the elegant and accurate commentator, is the want of colonnades and porticos. The principal entrances are approached by noble flights of steps; but these, being without shelter, are never used except upon state occasions, when a native durbar is held, and the nobles of Hindostan come in all their barbaric pomp to pay their respects at the vice-regal court; a circumstance of rare occurrence in the present day. The carriages of the European visitants drive under these steps, and the company enter through the lower regions.

The effect upon a stranger, who has not been previously made acquainted with the cause of the arrangement, is very singular. It is scarcely possible for a lively imagination to escape the notion that, instead of being the guest of a palace, he is

on the point of being conducted to some hideous dungeon as a prisoner of state. The hall which opens upon the dark cloister formed by the arch of the steps above, is large, low, and dimly lighted, completely realizing the *beau ideal* of the interior of the Inquisition. A good deal of rubbish of various kinds, piled confusedly and put out of the way behind rows of pillars, traversing the length of the hall, favours the supposition that it is a place of punishment ; for in their shapeless obscurity, these fire-engines, or printing-presses, or whatever they may be, have very much the appearance of instruments of torture.

Upon the floor, the spectator, who has imbibed, the apprehension that he has been entrapped into some pandemonium of horror, may see the dead bodies of the victims to a tyrannical government thickly strewn around :—human forms apparently wrapped in winding-sheets, and stretched out without sense or motion upon the bare pavement, add to the ghastly effect of the scene. These are the palanquin-bearers, who, wrapped up from head to foot in long coarse cloths, are enjoying the sweets of repose, little dreaming of the appalling spectacle they present to unaccustomed eyes. Many dusky figures move about with noiseless tread; and

were it not for one redeeming circumstance, the whole panorama would be calculated to inspire horror and alarm. In the midst of these dreary catacombs, gay parties of visitors, ladies in ball-dresses, and gentlemen in full uniform, are passing along, not in the least discomposed by appearances so familiar to them, even when there is the additional *agrément* of a fog, which in the cold season usually casts a mystic veil over these subterraneous apartments.

Emerging from the damp, darkness, and corpse-like figures of the sleepers, an illuminated vestibule leads to a staircase, handsome in itself, but not exactly correspondent with the size of the building, and the halls of state to which it is the approach. It is not until the visitant has gained the altitude of the hall, that the eye is greeted by any portion of the pomp and grandeur associated with our ideas of a court. Guards are now stationed at intervals; those which were formerly attached to the Governor-general were a splendid and picturesque set of men, clad in strange and striking costume; warlike as became a military power, and particularly ornamental as the appendages of state. The spirit of retrenchment, which has lately descended to petty savings, unworthy of the masters of so magnificent a terri-

tory, has removed and abolished this appropriate guard of honour; and the natives, already astonished and disappointed by the contrast afforded by the simplicity and plainness of their European rulers, with the pomp and pageantry of oriental courts, viewed this last innovation with disapprobation and regret. As the visitor ascends, the turbaned domestics of the household become more numerous; long corridors, leading to the wings, matted and lighted, present noble ideas of the extent and grandeur of the building; and at every landing-place the necessary pause for breath is spent in admiration of the contrivance of the architect to ensure a circulation of air, which comes so freely through the connecting galleries.

The suites of apartments devoted to large evening-parties occupy the third story. The ball-room, or throne-room, as it is called, is approached through a splendid antechamber; both are floored with dark polished wood, and supported by Ionic pillars, leaving a wide space in the centre, with an aisle on either side; handsome sofas of blue satin damask are placed between the pillars, and floods of light are shed through the whole range from a profusion of cut-glass chandeliers and lustrea. Formerly, the ceilings were painted, but the little reverence

shewn by the white ants to works of art, obliged them to be removed, and gilt mouldings are now the only ornaments. The throne, never particularly superb, is now getting shabby; a canopy of crimson damask, surmounted by a crown, and supported upon gilt pillars, is raised over a seat of crimson and gold; in front, there is a row of gilded chairs, and it is the etiquette for the viceroy and the vice-queen, upon occasions of state, to stand before the throne to receive the presentations. There is, however, nothing like a drawing-room held at this court; no lord chamberlain, or noblemen in waiting, or any functionaries corresponding with these personages, except the aides-de-camp, who are seldom very efficient, being more intent upon amusing themselves than anxious to do the honours to the company. In these degenerate days, so little state is kept up, that, after the first half-hour, the representatives of sovereignty quit their dignified post, and mingle with the assembled crowd.

There is no court-dress, or scarcely anything to distinguish the public nights at Government-house from a private party. Excepting that until lately, no gentleman was permitted to appear in a white jacket. An attempt was made by Lady Hastings to establish a more rigid system of etiquette; she

had her chamberlain, and her train was held up by pages. An intimation was given to the ladies that it was expected they would appear in court plumes, and many were prevented from attending in consequence of the dearth of ostrich feathers, the whole of the supply being speedily bought up ; and as it was not considered allowable to substitute native products, there was no alternative but to remain at home. The extreme horror which European ladies entertained of appearing to imitate the natives, banished gold and silver from their robes : not contented with the difference in the fashion of their garments, they refused to wear any articles of Indian manufacture, careless of the mean effect produced by this fastidiousness. Few had been accustomed to European courts ; and having once established rules and regulations of their own, they stoutly resisted all attempts at alteration and innovation, every arrival being obliged to submit to the customs of the colony. The great influx of strangers at Calcutta has effected some change in the system ; visitors are not now so much under the control of the leading people ; they appear in whatever may be the fashion in England ; and instead of, as heretofore, being obliged to rip off the silver trimmings from their dresses, or discard them

altogether, to avoid the appellation of *nautch girls*, they are allowed to sparkle and glitter without provoking many invidious remarks.

Where shall I walk at Government-house? formed an interrogatory to which, a few years ago, the suitors who could not give a satisfactory answer had little chance of success. The enquiry now is seldom made; the reply having lost much of its importance. At the state-dinners, ladies sit according to their rank, and they are as nearly paired with male attendants of equal pretensions as circumstances will admit; but at balls and suppers, after the Governor-general has led the wife of the greatest personage to table, the rest of the party follow in an indiscriminate manner. It is not, however, very long since the struggle for precedence was carried on with a spirit and perseverance worthy of colonial warfare; two or three questions were sent home for final adjustment, and the wives of civilians, high in office, were much mortified to find that they were not entitled to take place of the daughters of English peers, even though they should have married ensigns. It was decided that Lady Mary or the Honourable Mrs., had a right to precedence, whatever their husbands' military rank might be; and still worse, that the younger

brothers of noble families could exalt their wives above the other ladies, though in their military or civil capacity they themselves must give place to their superiors in office. The humble titles assumed by the servants of the Honourable Company of Merchants trading to the East-Indies, of senior and junior merchants, factors, and writers, were much at variance with their notions concerning their dignity, and the precedence they considered themselves to be entitled to take of the ancient nobility of England, and general officers holding the King's or the Company's commissions; but the narrow notions engendered by the pride of office, are not so prevalent as heretofore; the magnates of the colony are not quite so important in their own eyes, or in the estimation of those beneath them, and too much ridicule is now attached to squabbles about a seat at table, to render the discussion of such topics very general.

Government-house is the only place in which the guests are not allowed to introduce their own attendants; the servants of the establishment are numerous, and perfectly equal to the duties required. They are handsomely clothed in livery according to the Hindoostanee fashion; wearing in the hot weather, white muslin vests and trowsers,

with *cummerbunds* or sashes, twisted with scarlet or some other colour, and the crest in silver in their turbans. In the cold weather, the vest is of cloth of the livery colour. They are all fine-looking men, and the uniformity of their appearance gives them a great advantage over the promiscuous multitude usually in attendance at large parties; though the absence of the personal domestic is considered by many a heavy grievance, and more especially by those who are deprived by the existing regulations of the indulgence of the hookah.

There is no established rule respecting the entertainments at Government-house; no service of plate, or decorations for the table belonging to the establishment. The grandeur of the banquets depends entirely upon the taste and liberality of the person who holds the appointment of Governor-general for the time being; and it is whispered that there are not always a sufficient quantity of silver forks for all the guests, and that the side-tables are sometimes supplied with a manufacture of steel of no very tempting appearance. An ornamental supper, as far as the viands are concerned, is still a desideratum in Calcutta; Government-house being very little in advance of less distinguished mansions; and perhaps the only superiority it can

boast, consisting in such refinement as excludes large heavy joints, and substitutes a loin for a saddle of mutton. The small, delicate, gem-like, tempting dishes, which glitter on a supper-table in London, have no counterparts in the City of Palaces; every thing there is solid, substantial, and undisguised, a state of things entirely attributable to the prejudices of European society, since the genius of cookery possessed by the natives only requires to be drawn into action. A very small quantity of instruction would suffice to render them unrivalled in every confectionary and culinary art; and there cannot be the slightest reason for the inelegance which characterizes a Calcutta banquet, except the real or affected horror which is entertained of black cooks.

The parties at Government-house, for the reasons before assigned, do not derive the brilliancy which might be expected from the dresses of the ladies; the effect, at least, when compared to that of European ball-rooms, is disappointing; there is a want of freshness and lustre about the attire, which is very striking to a stranger's eye; nor can there be so much fancy and variety exhibited in the form and ornaments, in a place where fashions and milliners are few, as in those more favoured

capitals, where the success of multitudes of artists and tradespeople depends upon the taste and invention they display. Of course, there are numerous exceptions—many individual toilettes which may be pronounced perfect; but these are lost or obscured in the cloudiness which prevails, and always will prevail, so long as the female residents of India prefer the faded manufactures of Europe to the gorgeous fabrics of oriental looms. At fancy-balls, where the products of the country are rendered available, the difference of the effect is astonishing; instead of being confined within the narrow limits prescribed by the last bulletins from London or Paris, fancy and talent have free scope; and in no assemblage of the kind could more magnificent groups be found than those which have made their appearance at Government-house. Military uniforms, in some degree, make up for the sombreness of female attire upon more ordinary occasions; and the effect of a well-filled ball-room is much heightened when the company is not exclusively composed of Europeans. The dress of the Armenian ladies is picturesque and striking, though the peculiarity is chiefly confined to the head; they wear a glittering tiara of a very singular and classic form across the forehead, with a

veil suspended from the top, and hanging down in graceful folds on either side. It is not, however, very often that these ladies are seen in the public assemblies of Calcutta, in which, until very lately, it has not been thought either advisable or agreeable to encourage a promiscuous assemblage of different classes and communities. Without wishing to impugn the motives upon which the former rulers of India have acted; it is impossible not to admit that a more liberal system is better suited to the present time. Doubtless the innovations which have taken and are still taking place, will be very unpalatable to those who remember the extraordinary dignity attached to official situations and white faces in former days; but those who entertain more enlarged views, will rejoice that some of the barriers which have divided persons of different persuasions and different complexions from each other, have been broken down, and are disappearing. Bishop Heber, whose kindness of heart and liberality of mind have justly endeared him to the Indian world, was the first to shew an example to the intolerant and exclusive patricians of Calcutta, by opening his doors to respectable persons of all sects and countries. At his house, Christians of the Roman Catholic, Greek, and Pro-

testant churches met, together with Hindoos, Moslems, Jews, and Parsees: he recommended the religion which he preached by the practice of the widest philanthropy; and, had he been spared, the popularity of his manners, and the well-known benevolence of his disposition, would have done much towards the removal of prejudices, which have for so long a period prevented a free and social communication between Européans and Asiatics.

A few native gentlemen, who have either adopted English customs, or are so well acquainted with them as not to be guilty of any misapprehension or mistake, have for many years mingled freely in the fashionable circles of Calcutta, making their appearance at private parties, and joining in the subscriptions for public amusements; they were distinguished in large assemblies for the elegance of their costume, and the splendour of their diamonds; and persons who did not enter into the narrow notions which were but too prevalent, regretted that a much larger proportion of the same class should not have been encouraged to follow their example. Latterly, invitations to Government-house have been very widely extended amongst the natives of rank; and the introduction of men, ignorant of the rules and regulations of European society has given

offence, and occasioned disgust to those who do not consider the measure to be expedient, or who refuse to make allowance for early notions and rooted opinions, which nothing but more intimate association can dissipate. Asiatics, at present, are not aware of the restrictions imposed in Europe by etiquette and good-breeding on the intercourse between ladies and gentlemen; they see them converse together, dance together, and walk arm in arm together, and when admitted to the same degree of familiarity, they are apt to make very ridiculous trespasses. Without the slightest intentional rudeness, a native gave great offence by seating himself on the arm of a lady's chair; and not knowing the precise limits which propriety has marked out, they do not always offer the deferential respect which women expect, and which, rather inconsiderately, they exact more strictly from foreigners than from their own countrymen, who, being better acquainted with the rules and observances, are less excusable in their breach or omission. At this day, the degree of decorum necessary to be adopted in the presence of French ladies, is so little understood by John Bull, that he is continually offering insult and annoyance, by exceeding a latitude in conversation which he has erroneously supposed to have no bounds. It

is thus that Asiatics offend, and constant intercourse can alone render them acquainted with the terms upon which gentlemen mix in respectable female society. It is certainly not very agreeable to be obliged to give the lesson; but the consequences are too important to be neglected, especially at a period in which there are such strong manifestations of the abandonment of prejudices hitherto supposed to be insurmountable.

In the native papers, published in Calcutta, the advantages and disadvantages of extending the indulgences enjoyed by European women to Asiatics are freely discussed; there seems to be no question about the expediency of improving the mind, and giving a more liberal education than has heretofore been considered necessary; emancipation must follow as a matter of course. Some of the writers have taken upon themselves the task of vindicating the privileges enjoyed by the Asiatic women, and have attempted to shew that, in point of fact, they are not under any restrictions at all; but such persons have no chance against the advocates for improvement: the reasoning on both sides is not a little curious, bearing strong evidence of the novelty of the subject, and the crude ideas it has engendered.

The custom of polygamy, appears to be the grand difficulty to the approximation to European manners, which upon many accounts would be so desirable; but it is astonishing how very little is known concerning the domestic establishment of either Moslem or Hindoo.

A modern Persian writer* has said that, from his own experience in the matter, it is easier to live with two tigresses than two wives; and in India, many more persons than is usually supposed, either through individual attachment, or for the sake of peace and quietness, content themselves with one. There is always so great a distinction between the first wife, and those who submit to take an inferior rank, that no persons of wealth or family would permit their daughters to contract a marriage with a man who has already placed a lady at the head of his establishment; and therefore it would appear that, in reality, there is rather a plurality of mistresses than of wives; and that, though the custom of the country sanctions their living together, the first, or, as she is sometimes termed, the *equal* wife, is the only person of great respectability or consequence, the other women being either in a very subordinate capa-

* Abu Taleb Khan.

city, or degraded to the condition of household servants.

Few things are more surprising to native gentlemen than the display of female talent in arts or acquirements which have been considered the exclusive possession of men. Accomplishments, particularly those of music and dancing, are not held in any respect; but their encomiums upon female artists and authors, shew that they entertain great reverence for such manifestations of intellectual superiority. A Mahratta General, at a ball, asked to be introduced to the lady who had written a book; and in looking at miniatures from a female pencil, it was frequently remarked that the English women exceeded the men in talent.

Want of urbanity, a too common trait in the English character, will, it is to be feared, retard the good understanding which ought to exist between natives of rank and the servants of their foreign rulers; but there can be little doubt that our retaining the possession of India will mainly depend upon the conciliation of a class of persons, whom it appears to have been hitherto the policy to depress and neglect, if not to insult. Natives of rank, property, and influence, must speedily acquire a knowledge of their position and of their

strength; and unless they should obtain the respect, consideration, and importance, which seem so justly their due, it can scarcely be expected that they will continue to give their support to a government, whose servants are resolutely opposed to their interests. Hitherto there has been little to tempt them into private society; with very few exceptions, Anglo-Indian residents have been indisposed to impart or to receive information from natives; they have taken little pains to instruct them upon the subject of modes and manners which must have struck them as being odd and unaccountable, or to inspire them with respect by the display of superior mental powers. But while ball-rooms have been deserted, the theatre has always proved an attraction. Parties of Hindostanee gentlemen, beautifully clad in white muslin, and, should the weather be cold, enveloped in Cashmeres, which would make the heart of a Parisian lady swell with envy, take their places in the boxes of the Chowringee theatre, sitting in the first row, and as near the stage as possible. They prefer tragedy to comedy; and when the treasury is very low, and a full attendance of some consequence, the manager, consulting rather the interests of the house than the talents of the actors, announces the representation

of *Macbeth* or *Othello*, which is sure to crowd the benches with Asiatic spectators.

A spirit of enquiry is now awakened in the minds of the natives, which cannot fail to lead to very important results; their anxiety to render themselves acquainted with the means by which science has been enabled to produce such extraordinary effects, will establish the bond of union so much wanted between them and the European residents. At the formal visits, to which the intercourse has until now been too much restricted, the greater portion of gentlemen holding official situations, have found the mode of conversation, carried on according to eastern etiquette, too irksome for long endurance; and rather than submit to usages and customs which were new and disagreeable, they abridged all communication as much as possible, giving very little encouragement to the natives to persevere in the attempt to cultivate a better understanding. Where no interpreter is required, persons of equal rank, upon visits of ceremony, rarely converse with each other. Their observations are directed to the chief personages of their retinue, and the individual thus circuitously addressed, replies in the same manner. There is something very absurd in seeing, at some small

military post, an interview of this nature take place between the English commandant and a petty rajah in the neighbourhood. The latter makes his appearance with as large a *sucarree* as he can muster; his elephants, horses, state-palanquins, *hir-earrahs*, *peons*, and matchlock-men, many in very ragged case, are drawn up in an imposing manner on the outside, and he enters, accompanied by the younger branches of his family, and hangers-on of a rather inferior description, who put themselves behind the chairs set for the great people. However averse the officer thus visited may be to ostentation and parade, his servants have his honour too much at heart to permit him to use his own discretion; they crowd into the antechambers, and verandahs, those at the head of the establishment take up a position which enables them to support their master's dignity by becoming the medium of communication; conversation is thus necessarily reduced to common-places, and, excepting when circumstances require an almost daily intercourse, Europeans are seldom or ever at the pains to place it upon a more friendly footing.

While we must regret that so long a period has been suffered to elapse, without cementing a closer bond of union between the Anglo-Indian and the

Asiatic community, it would be unfair not to make allowances for the peculiar position of the British residents in Hindostan. An Englishman always finds it very difficult to accommodate himself to foreign usages and customs; and as the greater number of civil and military servants were placed in very responsible situations, they might consider it advisable not to incur the suspicion of an interested partiality, by an intimate personal acquaintance with natives, whom in their official capacity they might be supposed to favour from some selfish motive. It must also be considered that, although we have now full and undisputed possession of the whole of the peninsula, the quiet settlement of the country under British rule has been effected within a limited period, and that in the difficult position in which Europeans were placed, it would have been impolitic to mix themselves up with persons, who in all probability would have taken advantage of confidence too rashly placed. It is highly honourable to the British character that, in spite of its want of urbanity, and the little personal affection which it creates, its uprightness and steadiness have secured the fidelity of immense multitudes bound to a foreign government by the equal distribution of justice and the

security of property. It is unfortunate that we cannot unite the more endearing qualities with the moral excellencies for which we are distinguished : but, as the aspect of affairs is altering in India, we shall do well to consult the signs of the times, and remedy those defects which we have found in our system before it be too late.

It is greatly to the credit of the natives of India that they are disliked and despised only by those who are either unacquainted with their language, or who have been very little in their society. From such men as Mr. Hastings, Sir John Malcolm, Colonel Tod, Sir Thomas Munro, Mr. Elphinstone, and indeed all who have had opportunities of becoming intimately acquainted with them, they have received justice ; their faults and vices are those of their religion and their laws, but, notwithstanding almost innumerable circumstances adverse to the formation of moral character, they possess many endearing and redeeming virtues, and no people in the world are so quick at discerning merit, or so ready to acknowledge it.

The latest accounts from Calcutta state, that the present Governor-general has determined to break through “ the unjust and aristocratical distinctions ” which, as the writer terms it, “ have for so long a

period *fostered the feelings* * of those in the less elevated grades of Indian society," by extending the invitations to Government-house to persons who, previous to his appointment, had not been considered eligible to so high an honour. Whether this measure, which relates to the European portion of the community, will produce the good effect which the commentator of the *India Gazette* so fondly anticipates, is exceedingly questionable. He tells us that it will "strengthen the attachment to the government, and enable individuals in different stations of life to form intimacies engendered by merit." Few persons above the very lowest orders are desirous to destroy all the distinctions of rank; an unlimited *entré* into Government-house to Europeans of every description would not, we believe, be considered advisable, and wherever the line of demarcation shall be placed, there will be discontent. Those who are most anxious to gain admission for themselves, feel equally desirous to exclude the class immediately beneath them; and on inquiry it will be found that those shopkeepers, who complain of the prejudices which kept them out of the

* The study of grandiloquence cannot be pursued to more advantage than in the columns of a Colonial Newspaper,

best society, refuse to associate with trades which are not considered so genteel as their own. The reception-rooms at Government-house may be crowded by all sorts and conditions of men, but so far from engendering friendships between them, the only effect of such indiscriminate assemblages will be to bring the public parties into disrepute, and to render private society more rigid and exclusive than ever.*

There is already a tendency to divide and separate in the Anglo-Indian community of Calcutta ;

* Cards of invitation to the balls and parties of Government-house have been lately sent to persons in the pilot service : very respectable men, no doubt, but from their habits, education, and manners, scarcely fitting guests for the circle of a court. It is said, that even the stewards of ships found entrance into these promiscuous assemblies, and that the company altogether made a strange appearance. Some of the gentlemen chose to appear in *deshabille*, wearing white calico jackets, and carrying white beaver hats under their arms ; others were requested to withdraw in consequence of the unruliness of their demeanour ; while those who were too well conducted to transgress the bounds of decorum, spent their time in a very uncomfortable state of restraint. On one of these guests being asked, how he was amused at the party ? he replied, " Pretty well ; five or six of us got together and sat down." This person brought his invitation with him to England in order to convince the incredulous.

several circles are now forming where one alone formerly embraced the whole of the resident gentry. In a less extensive population, every body of a certain rank became acquainted with each other, and visited without reference to superiority of income, or of the different degrees of honour attached to their individual occupations and pursuits; but as the number of residents have increased, they have been attracted to each other by similarity of circumstances. New arrivals have become too numerous to excite general observation and attention, and the hospitality which they experience is confined to those to whom they have been particularly recommended. Now that there is a choice of visitors, people are beginning to be fastidious, and to look with disdain upon parties which are not select; and in a short time Calcutta will resemble London in its exactions of certain passports and credentials for admission into the best society. When to visit at the Government-parties ceases to confer any distinction, the leading people of the presidency will only give their attendance when it cannot be avoided. Invidious differences will be made between private and public nights, and the feelings of those who are excluded will continue to fester, upon the discovery that little or nothing has

been gained by a relaxation of court etiquette. At no period has exclusion from Government-house, rendered the party ineligible to admission to private society in Calcutta, where the distinctions are certainly not more invidious to Europeans than those of any other city.

The position of Indo-Britons at Government-house is somewhat singular, and it perhaps would have been advisable to have extended invitations to respectable persons of that class. In this case, native prejudice has been more considered than the aristocratic feeling which has excluded retail dealers, who boast an unsullied descent from European parents. The natives look down, or at least have looked down, with great contempt upon a mixed breed, which, upon the maternal side must have sprung from the lowest or the least virtuous class of society; and Anglo-Indians, who chose to associate with the half-caste children of the soil, forfeited their claims to mix among their equals. To be seen in public with, or to be known to be intimate at the houses of Indo-Britons, was fatal to a new arrival in Calcutta; there was no possibility of emerging from the shade, or of making friends or connections in a higher sphere. The better classes of the Eurasians, as it is now the fashion

to call them, bore their exclusion with more equanimity than the European shopkeepers, though certainly their case was the harder of the two; many were merchants on a very extensive scale, whose occupation could not be objected to, the tint of their skin being the only thing against them. Latterly, however, a great stir has been made by this portion of the community, who, in the orations with which the Town Hall has rang, and the appeals issuing from the press, descant with more eloquence than judgment upon the wrongs of their country, sometimes arrogating to themselves the glory of their maternal ancestors, and at others claiming the rights of Englishmen, and demanding to be placed in official situations under a government which they represent to be little better than an usurpation.

For a very long period, no half-caste was admitted into Government-house; marriages with this class of the community were discouraged by banishment from society, and even by the forfeiture of office. Nevertheless, the charms of the dark-eyed beauties prevailed; a man of high rank contrived to introduce his wife; other married ladies were admitted, there being no longer any plea for their exclusion; but it was still a long time before excep-

tions were made in favour of illegitimate daughters. Several succeeding Governors-general positively refused to admit them ; and it is not exactly known how their entrance was effected at last. These young ladies form the only individuals of their sex who enjoy greater privileges than are allowed to the masculine portion of the same class. Emancipation from the restrictions which oblige them to move in a very inferior grade of society, has been rigidly denied to the sons of Europeans by native women ; their only employments leading to wealth have been wholly mercantile, and the greater number have been only qualified to fill the lower orders of clerkships. At the orphan schools, the sisters of families are taught to dance ; but that accomplishment is not considered necessary in the education of the brothers, and the young ladies, conscious of their superior prospects, look down upon their male relatives with undisguised disdain. Nearly all the females aspire to marriages with Europeans, and are with great reluctance prevailed upon to unite themselves to persons of their own class. The men are less ambitious ; they are afraid of being despised by their wives, or perhaps, in consequence of the greater difficulty of forming alliances amongst persons of a different complexion, are

content to match with those of their own condition.*

The city of Calcutta is indebted to the Marquess Wellesley for the erection of Government-house. Previous to the appointment of that nobleman to the viceroyship of India, there was nothing in the city worthy of the name, or at all superior to the residence in Fort William, intended for the retreat of the Governor-general in the event of the attack of the city by a hostile force. A great part of the furniture and ornamental decorations was purchased at the sale of General Claude Martine's effects at Lucknow; but they are little worthy of the edifice. There are a few good portraits in the council chamber, those of Lord Clive and Mr. Hastings being esteemed fine specimens of the art; altogether, however, the interior disappoints, falling far short of the expectations raised by the size and external grandeur of the building, and the power of the Government by which it has been erected. Its

* It cannot be too strongly impressed upon the reader's mind, that these exclusions originated in the prejudices of the natives, who, while professing their willingness to be governed by Europeans, absolutely refused to submit to persons springing from outcast females. Hence the impossibility of admitting half-castes into the Company's army.

pinnacles are the favourite resort of the *argelak*, or butcher-bird, commonly called the adjutant. It is said that every one of these animals has its peculiar roosting-place, and, as they stand motionless on their perches, they are frequently mistaken at a little distance for stone appendages of the building.

Notwithstanding the exclusions which are described to be so "festering to the feelings," the walls of Government-house have witnessed an odd *mélange* of guests; many have strutted in great importance along its lighted saloons, whose pretensions to such an honour would have been considered more than doubtful in England.

The *entré* is extended to captains of free-traders, some of whom seem rather out of their element in fashionable parties; but the honours paid to merchants in the naval service are, in the present day, as nothing compared to the glories of their reception before the trade was open, and when they brought intelligence ardently looked-for, and supplies of still greater importance. Formerly, the commandant of an Indiaman was received in Calcutta with a royal salute; his colonial rank was equal to that of a post-captain in the Royal Navy, and he was not less of a bashaw in the state-apart-

ments of Government-house, than on the boards of his own quarter-deck. Skippers of chartered vessels trading to India were aspirants for seats in the direction; they made enormous fortunes by the sale of their cargoes; and a passage home in their floating hotels amounted to a sum, the interest of which would have maintained a moderate person in comfort for life. Old Indians are fond of reverting to these glorious days; when money was plenty and news scarce; when vessels were a year upon their voyage, and their freight, always insufficient to supply the demand, sold at the most extravagant prices; when people contrived to get in debt upon princely fortunes, and accustomed themselves to so lavish a profusion of money, that they found they could not return home unless they had the Bank of England at their command. It was in these days that the parties at Government-house were in their glory; when the visitants felt their importance, and were looked up to by the inferior orders of the community as kings and princes. Men high in office never appeared without their *chobdars*; and all the natives whom they met were obliged, according to the custom of the country, to alight from their vehicles, and remain standing until they had passed. It was necessary, in earlier times, for

the English rulers to imitate the state and grandeur of the native potentates in their neighbourhood, who insisted upon this mark of respectful homage, and to which Europeans resident at their courts were compelled, however reluctantly, to submit.

In a letter dated 1776, we see how deeply the indignity, thus sustained by an Englishman, rankled in his mind. Speaking of the death of Cossim Ally Khan, who had experienced great reverses, and expired in poverty without friends or followers, the writer, an officer in the Company's service, says: "In passing by his children the other day, I could not help recollecting the having once, at Patna, been obliged to dismount from my horse and wait a-foot till his retinue had passed me, before I was permitted to mount again, or to retire. I could have done the same by his children: but I bear no malice, *and besides he could not well have known it himself.*" At Delhi and Lucknow, the approach of the king is still announced by kettle-drums, which warn all other passengers to get out of the way; all the umbrellas are furled,—and the people who are unable to effect a retreat, are obliged to descend from their carriages and stand on foot, with folded hands, while the royal personage passes. The Resident alone is

permitted to keep his *chattah* over his head in the presence of the king of Oude, the rest of the Europeans being still obliged to endure the scorching rays of the sun unsheltered, while they have the honour to be in the monarch's company.

Such customs were only kept up by Europeans as long as they were positively necessary. The Governor-general now goes about Calcutta, not only without state, but in the humblest manner; the present viceroy, having, it is said, upon more than one occasion, asked a seat in a buggy of a stranger, who did not guess the rank of his companion until he was requested to drive to Government-house: like the most celebrated Caliph of Bagdad, he was fond of perambulating the city *incog*. Though, in former times, such conduct would have brought the government into contempt, the natives of Calcutta are now so much accustomed to the unostentatious mode of living pursued by the *Feringhees*, that they have lost a great part of the astonishment it formerly excited: still they are of opinion that England must be a very poor country, in which people live so miserably that they do not know how to assume the state to which they might aspire in India.

Every native, however, who comes to England,

expresses his surprise at the splendour which meets his gaze. The number and magnificence of the equipages particularly attract their notice. At one of the late drawing-rooms, two Suwars, who have made their way to the Court of Directors from the Upper Provinces, expressed their admiration in a very lively manner, of the carriages and horses which they saw assembled in St. James's Street. Several officers, who spoke their language, were amongst the spectators; and they derived infinite gratification from the questions and remarks of these men. They asked whether there were many other cities of equal size and splendour in England, and confessed that they had no expectation of seeing the wealth and comfort which were displayed in all directions. The quantity of goods exposed in the shops, and the abundant clothing worn by all ranks of the people, excited their surprise, and they will probably go back astonished that any body should be induced to leave a land flowing with riches of every description, to seek their fortunes in so poor a country as India.

CHAPTER IV.

ARRAH.

THE beauties of the province of Behar have become extensively known from numerous drawings and lithographs, by the pencil of Sir Charles D'Oyley, whose views of this part of India and of Dacca are in possession of all who have the means of gratifying a taste for the splendid scenery of our Indian territories. River-travellers have little opportunity of judging of the richness and fertility of this fine tract of country, since its aspect towards the Ganges is less luxuriant than that of the greener shores of its neighbour, Bengal; but, in penetrating a little into the interior, every step is fraught with objects replete with interest. The province is not destitute of hills; and the whole surface is sufficiently undulated to give variety and picturesqueness to the views, which are distinguished by a quiet kind of beauty exceedingly delightful to the eye. Numerous mosques and pagodas, perched on rocky eminences or embosomed in trees, form the principal features, diver-

sified occasionally by fine old Moosulmaun tombs in equally happy situations.

Arrah, a small, and, as it is technically termed, "civil" station, five-and-thirty miles west of Patna, is one of the prettiest places of the kind in India. The society is very limited, seldom consisting of more than five families—those of the judge and the collector, their respective assistants, and a surgeon. Not many European stations are without indigo-factories in their immediate vicinity ; but when they are few in number, a variety of circumstances may occur to prevent their contributing their quota to the society of the place. The owners are not always resident ; and where there are no ladies in the family, in those seasons of the year in which the planter is wholly occupied by the process of manufacturing the indigo, there can be little communication between him and his neighbours. Sometimes the station is nearly deserted, the judge and the collector betaking themselves to the woods, and making the circuit of the district in pursuance of their official duties.

It was at one of these periods that I paid my first visit to this beautiful spot ; and though it could scarcely be dignified by the name of an adventure, it formed one of the most interesting

and romantic incidents of a journey of seven hundred miles, undertaken alone, and with so limited a knowledge of the language as scarcely to permit me to boast of any acquaintance with it at all. Arrah had been mentioned by the post-master at Benares (from which station, after a rest of a few days, my journey had been continued) as a convenient halting-place for twenty-four hours, since, before I reached it, passing the hot period of each day at Ghazeepore and Buxar, I must be three nights upon the road: a prospect threatening considerable fatigue, with the few chances of obtaining any thing save broken and restless slumbers offered by a palanquin. On my arrival at Buxar, where I had expected to be furnished with letters of introduction to one of the principal families, I learned that all the married people were absent from their homes. The unbounded hospitality exercised all over India rendered this information immaterial, as far as my comfort was concerned; I could have no hesitation in entering the house of an European in the absence of its owners, as I felt assured that it would not, when reported to them, be considered an intrusion; but that, on the contrary, they would only regret that they had not been at home to receive me. I felt anxious, how-

ever, to obtain some sort of credential to supply the want of oral communication, and was therefore furnished by the post-master with a letter, written in Persian, and addressed to the servant in charge of the house belonging to the judge.

I left a dinner-party at Buxar (which I had reached in the morning) about eleven at night; and in consequence of a mistake in the directions given to the bearers, who were not in attendance at the end of the first stage, did not arrive at Arrah until eight in the morning. The mansion of the *Burra Saib* was easily found, and in going up to the principal entrance, the worthy old sirdar-bearer aroused himself from a very comfortable repose, which he was enjoying in the verandah, to do the honours of the house. It was very evident that he could not read a word of the letter, which he twisted about in his hands with a hopeless expression of countenance; but, nevertheless, he was quite prepared to render me every service in his power, and as we could not comprehend a single syllable which we addressed to each other, he very judiciously made my arrival known to the only Europeans in the place, two young gentlemen, assistants to the magistrate and civil surgeon. Previous to the arrival of these visitors, he led the way to the apartments he had

destined for my use, and I had excellent reason to be delighted with the splendour of my accommodation. Whilst perambulating the numerous chambers of this spacious mansion, under the superintendence of my dusky esquire, by a very slight stretch of the imagination, I could fancy myself in the situation of a heroine of a fairy tale, following the guidance of a strange conductor through the labyrinths of some enchanted castle. I certainly had never expected to see so perfect a realization of my youthful visions of the splendid retreat of the White Cat, the solitary palace of the King of the Black Islands, or the domicile of that most gracious of beasts, the interesting Azor. Long suites of lofty and beautifully-furnished apartments extended on every side; in the verandahs hung numerous cages filled with brilliantly-plumed birds, from the ranges of Nepaul, rare even in their neighbouring plains; an immense chameleon had taken up its abode in a tree planted in a large tub, and enclosed with lattice-work, and many other objects equally curious met my gaze; but I deferred a nearer inspection until I had changed my attire, and after crossing several handsome rooms, reached a bed-chamber, which opened into a boudoir and bathing-room, the prettiest of their

kind which I had yet seen in India. A sort of terraced verandah, shut in by a balustrade, and leading down by a flight of stone steps into a beautiful garden, stretched along one side of these delightful chambers; the prospect from this balcony was loveliness itself; beyond the bright parterres of flowers, a small lakelet spread its calm and silvery waters, while the back-ground was filled up gloriously with masses of forest-trees, bearing the richest luxuriance of foliage.

Weary and a wanderer, as I sat down amidst all this pomp of scenery, and surveyed the luxuries of the habitation which had become my temporary abode, I could not repress the vain wish that I had arrived at the end of my pilgrimage, and that I was destined to pass the remainder of my life in a retreat so well adapted to my taste, and presenting so many objects of attraction—books, pictures, flowers, and birds—to a mind already shrinking from the turmoils and troubles of the world. And now, when involved in cares and anxieties, struggling against difficulties, and perplexed by the perverse accidents of life, I cannot refrain from casting wistful glances back to that beautiful spot, sighing, as fancy tells me how calmly and tranquilly existence would have worn out in scenes so

congenial to a wearied spirit. My toilette was speedily completed; and, notwithstanding my raptures—breakfast being now a subject of considerable importance—I established myself in a splendid drawing-room, which, amongst its other embellishments, boasted a very excellent collection of books, ranged in chiffoniers, which stood between large panels in the walls, filled up with oil paintings from the pencil of the accomplished master of the house: decorations rather unusual in India, where it is so difficult to cultivate a taste for the fine arts, and where so many active enemies are at work to destroy the external appearance of volumes, generally worm-eaten and moth-eaten, if not wholly destroyed by white ants.

I had almost forgotten, over a new novel, my vexation at the obtuseness of the sirdar-bearer, who was at once the civilest and the stupidest of men, and who could not be made to understand that I required a bottle of tea, which I had brought with me, to be warmed for my morning's repast, when my studies were interrupted by the arrival of the two gentlemen before-mentioned, who hastened to pay their respects to the stranger, and to offer refreshment. My wish, it appeared, had been anticipated, for my visitors were speedily followed by

their servants, who spread a very excellent breakfast on the table, brought from the hospitable residence of my new friends, and which explained the unwillingness of the old sirdar to exert the powers of his art upon my humble bottle of tea: he knew that there was better provision at hand, and he was also fully aware of the breakfasting propensity of Anglo-Indians. The natives of Hindostan, though able to support long fasts, are by no means partial to abstinence from food beyond the usual hour for their meal, and readily enter into the feelings of Europeans, where eating is concerned. The common bearers, on a *dák* journey, will suggest the necessity of the traveller's taking some refreshment, and will readily exert themselves in procuring and preparing anything that a village bazaar may afford.

The rage of hunger being repressed, I entered into conversation with the gentlemen who were at once my entertainers and my guests, and learned from them some very interesting particulars relative to the state of the province.

On passing along the road leading to the house of the judge, which is situated at the end of the village, I was struck with the similitude between the scenery of this far and foreign land with that

which so frequently occurs in England. It looked like the approach to some populous hamlet, clustered with the houses and grounds of country gentlemen. The mansions of the European residents were too completely embosomed in trees to betray their Asiatic air; a small pagoda or two easily passed as a fantastic porter's lodge; and a large open forge, together with a yard closely resembling that of a wheelwright, completed the illusion. The village, whose outskirts had already attracted my attention, became indelibly engraved upon my memory by the narrative of some exceedingly shocking events which had lately occurred in it.

During a long series of years, the domestic quietude of Arrah had not been disturbed by brawls or bloodshed; its inhabitants appeared to be a quiet, inoffensive, industrious race, removed from all temptation to commit outrages on the persons or purses of their fellow-creatures. In the midst of this tranquillity, the judge was surprised by the sudden appearance of a peasant, who, with looks betokening the most direful alarm, informed him, that in ploughing a field in the close vicinity of the village, he had turned up the earth which covered the corse of a newly-murdered man. The

judge immediately proceeded in person to the spot, attended by the *outwal* of the place, and other officials. The body had been stripped; but, by some accident, the knife, with which its hasty sepulture had been effected, had dropped into the grave. Upon farther search, a vast number of human remains, in various stages of decomposition, were discovered; the field, indeed, appeared to be a perfect Golgotha, and as no one had been missed from the neighbourhood, it followed that the victims must be strangers. The horrible system of *Thuggy* had not, at that period, been fully developed, nor was it supposed to be practised in any part of this well-governed province, which had as yet escaped the infamous celebrity acquired by so many of its neighbours. The only clue to the perpetrator of these fearful murders was afforded by the knife, for suspicion failed to rest upon any inhabitant of the quiet village, where it appeared no man distrusted his neighbour: yet, as it was scarcely possible that professional banditti could exist so close to a populous place without the knowledge of the police, the slaughter was deemed to be the work of a single assassin, living in the heart of a well-regulated community, and outwardly conforming to its simple and harmless prac-

tices. Farther investigation established the truth of this conjecture. The knife was acknowledged at once by the blacksmith of the village to be his own workmanship; he had manufactured many such; but a difficulty remained in tracing it to the purchaser. The owner of a toddy-shop, the only person who was in the habit of offering accommodation to travellers and wayfarers—the class to which the unfortunate victims evidently belonged—was well-known as a customer, and his apprehension led to a disclosure of the frightful details of his infamous calling.

Dissipated and profligate characters alone, in India, indulge in the pernicious habit of drinking fermented liquors; travellers of this description, allured by the intoxicating beverage offered by the owner of the toddy-shop, were induced to take up their quarters for the night under his roof. They were readily stupified by the effects of this potent spirit, and in that helpless condition easily became the prey of their treacherous host. It was his custom to strangle the unfortunate wretches who fell into his toils, and, after stripping, to bury them in a convenient field. Usually, he made the graves too deep for any ordinary accident to reveal their hideous secrets; but, upon the last occasion, some

unforeseen circumstance retarded the perpetration of the murder to so late an hour, that he had not time to take the proper precautions, and the whole mystery of his abominable occupation was laid open to his shuddering neighbours. The confession of the assassin placed the matter beyond all doubt, and his execution restored the quiet village of Arrah to its usual character of innocence and peace. *Thugs* are generally gregarious, but this monster, though evidently belonging to the tribe designated by that name, pursued his dreadful trade alone.

One of the relators of the foregoing incident remarked, that he had the authority of a very respectable native for believing that practised murderers frequently prowl about the roads and villages in disguise, apparently in so helpless a condition as to disarm the suspicions of travellers; who, strong, active, and courageous, entertain no apprehension from the sinister designs of withered, wretched-looking objects, whom they could annihilate at once with a blow. “The narrator of the following incident,” continued my kind entertainer, “was proceeding homeward from Lucknow, together with some others of his friends who resided near his abode; before they had quitted the Oude frontier they fell in with a Mussulman *faqueer*, who

was apparently travelling in the same direction. As is often the case with native travellers (and the custom, by the way, affords great facilities to *Thugs*), a proposal was made that they should join company; this was agreed to, and the party proceeded forward. A little farther on they met another person whose abject and scarcely human appearance excited disgust as well as compassion. He begged piteously for alms, and represented himself to be in a starving condition. The narrator, a Rohilla Patan, of some blood, felt indignant at the intrusion of this squalid stranger, who, not content with asking charity, demanded to be allowed to travel on in company; the rest of the party except the *faqeer*, who was not so scrupulous, objected also. The *faqeer*, however, assured the new comer of his protection, and gave him some rice, which he had got ready-cooked; and with this disagreeable addition to their number, the company proceeded. Towards the evening of that day, the whole of the travellers arrived near a village, in which it was proposed to rest during the night: to this all except the *faqeer* agreed; but he had some vow to perform, which obliged him to take up his quarters under a tree, and, having selected one for the purpose, he pulled out his *narial*, or smoking appa-

tus, spread his carpet, and asked the mendicant, to whom he had shown so much kindness, to go into the village and get him a piece of lighted charcoal. The main body, after exchanging compliments, parted, and went on towards the village; but they had scarcely proceeded four hundred yards before they heard a cry coming from the direction of the place where they had left their late companions. Running back with all haste, they found the *faqeer* and his miserable-looking guest struggling on the ground; but before they could reach the combatants, the former had got the better of his adversary, whom he was holding down. A knife and a divided noose were lying on the ground. The *faqeer* explained the circumstances in which he had been discovered in the following manner: his faithless messenger had pretended to go upon the errand to the village, but, instead of proceeding thither, had hidden himself beneath some bushes, and, watching his opportunity, while the *faqeer* was busy about his smoking materials, stole softly behind him, and contrived to throw a noose over his head. The attack would have been rendered instantaneously fatal, had not the *faqeer*, while ignorant of his danger, put his hand to his throat, and luckily got his fingers entangled in the cord, which prevented

it from being so closely and tightly drawn as is usual in similar attempts. More providentially still, he had a knife in his girdle ; this he drew, and having severed the noose, he threw himself on the villainous *Thug*, who, now compelled to trust to personal strength alone, was speedily worsted in the conflict. The assassin being secured, it was proposed that he should suffer death upon the spot, a punishment he justly merited ; but which, notwithstanding the abundance of proof, would not perhaps be inflicted by the judicial authorities of a country so ill-governed as that of Oude, where the greatest criminals are frequently allowed to escape ; but the *faqueer* again interceded in behalf of the ungrateful wretch, and, at his earnest persuasion, the rest of the party agreed to let him go. The *faqueer* was not, however, inclined to suffer his prisoner to escape altogether without receiving some punishment for his misdoings ; he said that he could not part with him without giving him a token in remembrance of his late adventure, and, sharpening his knife, he cut off the *Thug's* nose, and then gathering his effects together, pursued his journey with great coolness and composure.

“ Knowing the narrator of this story,” continued my new friend, “ to be a man of respectable cha-

racter and undoubted veracity, as he assured me that he was an eye-witness of the whole affair, I have no doubt whatever that the incident actually occurred. From another intelligent native, with whom I conversed on the subject of those numerous hordes of banditti which, during so many ages, have been supposed to infest various parts of Hindostan, I learned that there existed a tradition which imputed the massacre of three thousand *Thugs* to the emperor Shah Jehan, who pursued these wretches with a secret but unremitting enmity, in consequence of the murder of one of his officers. The story is thus told, and, though not so well authenticated as many of a similar description, there being no direct evidence of the facts related, is generally believed by those who have handed it down from their forefathers.

“ An officer of high repute as well as great personal courage, was sent by the emperor on a confidential mission to Bengal. Having fulfilled his instructions, he set out on his return to the capital, and while upon the road, fell in with a considerable body of *Thugs*. Being of a wary and circumspect disposition, and, moreover, well-acquainted with the habits and manners of this description of robbers, he was upon his guard, and as they dared not

make an open attack, he knew that he was only in danger from stratagem. Completely alive to all the devices of his enemies, the first party, who tracked his route to a considerable distance, were unable to take him at disadvantage, and being at length weary of the pursuit, they made him over for a sum of money to a fresh band, who were easily incited by the report of the rich effects which he carried about with him, to attempt to possess themselves of them. These villains were as unsuccessful as their predecessors; they found the murder beset with too many difficulties to be accomplished, and meeting with another set of their associates, who were buoyed up with inflated notions of their own cleverness, they made the same bargain with them which had formerly appeared so promising to themselves. The officer continued to be so strictly upon his guard, that these new assailants had not a single opportunity of approaching his person, until he had nearly reached the end of his journey. The traveller's horse becoming quite exhausted, while in the midst of a wide plain, it was absolutely necessary to afford the wearied animal a short respite; and directing the *syce* to clean his charge and then to keep watch until he should awake, he laid himself down with his bundle of

valuables by his side. The *syce* cleaned his master's horse, but, as it might be expected from a Hindoo domestic, neglected the latter part of the command, and soon, weary of acting as sentinel, lay down and fell asleep. A *Thug*, who was on the reconnoitre, crept slowly and stealthily through the grass, and succeeded in flinging a noose over the bundle, which was too heavy for him to carry off without assistance; he then retreated, but the officer, who only counterfeited sleep, aware of the whole proceeding, disengaged his property from the snare and fastened the noose round the leg of his less vigilant *syce*. In consequence of this manoeuvre, when two or three of the confederates began to draw in the line, instead of securing the prize they sought, they got nothing but the astonished and half-stupified *syce*. The officer, with a laugh, mounted his horse, and rode onward until he entered the capital. Here he considered himself safe, and rejoicing at having escaped so many and such dangerous enemies, entered, as he began to feel hungry, the house of a person who kept a cook-shop, and ordered a *kubáb*, or dish of roast-meat, for his regale. He was shewn into an upper apartment furnished for the reception of visitors, and was soon supplied with what he required. A short

time afterwards, a second guest appeared, who was ushered into the same room and entertained in a similar manner. Some time elapsed, every thing remained quiet in the travellers' apartment, who did not make their re-appearance, as the man of the house had expected them to do when they had finished their meal. Somewhat surprised, he ran up stairs, and was horror-struck by the sight of a strangled corpse lying on the floor. He recognized in the murdered man the person of the first traveller; his assassin had effected his escape through a small window. Overwhelmed as he was by this shocking catastrophe, the cook had sense enough to know that, unless he could give an explanation of the business sufficiently clear to satisfy the *cutwal*, he should not escape death, and perhaps not even then. After some consultation with his wife and servant, he determined on concealing the affair altogether; he, therefore, put the body into a large wide-mouthed jar, and tying some heavy stones about it, flung it into the river. Murder, they say, will out; and this case proved one in point, for the cook's artifice did not succeed; the waters, refusing to conceal this foul deed, cast up the jar, which rose to the surface of the stream. It chanced that his majesty the emperor was sitting in an open

balcony of his palace, and beheld the jar swimming down the river. Curiosity, or some undefinable motive, caused him to determine to see what fortune had sent in this adventure ; his commands to that effect were speedily obeyed, the jar was fished out of the water and the dreadful nature of its contents made manifest. The king, enraged beyond all bounds by the discovery that such fearful acts were perpetrated close to his own residence, sent for the *cutwal*, and told him that he should lose his head unless he brought the murderer to punishment within a given time. The *cutwal*, stimulated by the fear of death, made strict inquiry, but for a considerable period without success ; at length, he summoned all the potters of the city, and placing the jar before them, it was recognized by the manufacturers and traced to the owner of the cook-shop. The poor wretch loudly protested his innocence, and the king consented to spare his life on condition of his bringing the real offender to justice. The cook's wits were sharpened by the danger in which he stood, and, calling to mind the person of the second traveller, he succeeded, after some time, in pointing him out to the police. A ring, which was indentified as belonging to the murdered officer, being found amongst the gar-

ments of the prisoner, placed the matter beyond a doubt, and Shah Jehan having examined him privately, and thus made himself acquainted with the frightful nature of the practices, and the extensive combinations, of the *Thugs*, dissembled deeply, and, pardoning the offender, rendered him the instrument of a more signal act of justice. Through the agency of this person, he succeeded in persuading great numbers of professional *Thugs* to enter his service ; it is said by some that he formed them into a distinct corps, but this was only a snare to ensure their destruction ; for he turned their own arts upon them, and at a feast to which they were solemnly invited, he surrounded the miscreants with his guards, and they were all cut to pieces."

These narratives, and the discussions they produced wore away the morning ; stories of murdered travellers, however frequently told, are always invested with a strange charm, and in the last adventure the introduction of the jar afforded a pleasing illustration of the popular tale of *The Forty Thieves*. To a lover of those agreeable fictions which go under the name of the *Arabian Nights*, some of the most delightful circumstances attendant upon travelling in India, proceed from the recognition of curious things mentioned in the wild and

wonderful legends, which have beguiled so many hours of our youth. The first time I saw one of the earthen-ware jars, in common use in Hindostan, fully capable of containing a man, standing in the small yard of a respectable native's house, the midnight sally of Morgiana recurred to my mind, with all the freshness and vividness made by the perusal of her courageous exploit, in years long numbered with the past.

The sun being on the decline, I was tempted, by the extreme beauty of the surrounding pleasure-grounds, to walk abroad, and, attended by the two gentlemen, entered a flower-garden, in which, in addition to the blossoming plants common to India, a great variety of European exotics bloomed. With the exception of balsams, single althæas and roses, very few of the out-of-door flowers of English growth are to be seen in the gardens of Hindostan ; even the mignonette, though a native of Arabia, is not common, but will thrive, like many others, if a succession of fresh seeds can be procured : for, unless the cultivators of distant places exchange their seeds with each other, foreign productions soon dwindle and die away.

This lovely garden led to the banks of a large tank, or rather lake, one of the most beautiful of

those pieces of artificial water with which the cultivated parts of India are so profusely embellished. In the centre, an island covered with lustrous flowering shrubs, formed a nest for innumerable small white herons, with snowy crests and feet of shivered topazes. Glancing in and out of the dark green foliage, skimming along the surface of the water, or bending into it from the golden sands sloping from their flowery abode, these delicate creatures recalled to the mind the fanciful creations with which painters delight to people their enchanted islands and haunts of fairies. At every step, I was reminded of the magic touches of Stanfield's pencil, so exquisitely depicting the scenery in *Oberon*, or of the still more magnificent delineations of paradise by Martin.

Opposite to a ghaut, or flight of steps, a superb tree spread its lofty and umbrageous canopy over a well. This monarch of the forest being held in great reverence by the Hindoo population of the place, groups of natives were gathered under it, filling their water-pots, or proceeding to and fro laden with those graceful vessels, which add such a picturesque effect to the finely-moulded forms and becoming garments of Indians of all castes. The crimson splendours of a setting sun threw a

rich glow upon every object, and lit up the whole scene with hues divine. I have subsequently met with many persons to whom this glorious landscape was familiar, and who spoke of it with indifference; but even under the influence of weak health and considerable bodily fatigue, it appeared to me one of the loveliest spots of earth on which my eyes had ever rested.

My companions pointed to a small tope, which fringed the border of the tank, and told me that it had been for many years the abode of a *faqueer*, whose story was somewhat romantic. A former proprietor of this beautiful domain, in a promenade through his grounds, stumbled over a strange unsightly object, which lay huddled up under a tree. On questioning this unfortunate remnant of humanity, the miserable wretch told him that he for a long time had not had any other shelter than that which the boughs of the trees afforded, or any food excepting the wild roots and berries of the wood. He said that he had never been molested by the former owner of the estate, and that he hoped he should not now be driven out from the rude asylum for which he had conceived a strong attachment. The early part of his life had been spent with credit in the Company's military service,

but, unhappily, smitten with a loathsome disease, on procuring his discharge, his wife and family refused to receive him, and thrust him from the door, and he was compelled to wander about at a distance from his fellow-men, who abjured companionship with a leper. The extreme misery of his existence rendered him totally regardless of life, or the means of supporting it, and abandoning himself to fate, he lay down at night at the foot of a tree, without any security from the attacks of wild animals, and exposed to the ravages of the jackalls, so bold as to gnaw the dead flesh from his hands and feet as they prowled around him, the bones in many places being laid bare. But the sufferings of this unfortunate had now reached their climax,—he had met with a benefactor at last. His mental and bodily grievances were soothed and alleviated by the compassionate kindness of his new friend, and the poor outcast leper found that, under the guardianship of a faithful follower of the divine precepts of the Christian religion, life had still many comforts and much happiness in store.

Mr. G—— lost no time in building a commodious hut, in which the maimed object of his bounty would be effectually sheltered from the

inclemencies of the weather and the incursions of wild beasts. The next acquisition of the *faqeer*, after his establishment in this habitation, was rather a singular one: he was provided with a tattoo, or country pony, which had free liberty to graze on the adjacent pastures. A beggar on horseback is frequently talked about, but seldom seen, yet the exhibition is not very uncommon in India, where mendicity is a trade, and where pretenders to sanctity ask alms while they are carried about in palanquins. The state of the poor leper's feet rendered some conveyance necessary, and he had, in consequence of the various comforts lavished upon him by his kind protector, become sufficiently attached to existence to make an effort to preserve it. Accordingly, mounted on his pony, he took his daily rounds through the village; and those who had shunned him while lying deserted on the bare earth, now, that he had shaken off a portion of his wretchedness, and basked under the favour of a great man, crowded around him with gifts. He obtained an ample supply of food and garments from the stores of the villagers, and began to accumulate money; though formerly so reckless of life and limb as to remain at the mercy of savage beasts, when possessed of an establishment of his

own, he became rather particular respecting its arrangements, and, not liking the way in which it had been thatched, ordered a new roof at his own expense: so true it is, that one acquisition always leads to the desire of others.

The *faqueer*, in all probability, died a rich man; for, although left to perish at the period in which, disgusted with the cruelty of the world, he had abandoned himself to the most abject wretchedness, no one was deaf to the solicitations of a person who had, through the hands of a gentleman in universal estimation, received so many marks of the favour of an over-ruling providence.

On my return to the house, I found dinner prepared, and the founders of the feast, taking leave, left me to the enjoyment of my repast; and I again, while seated alone in an illuminated apartment, and attended by strange domestics, who did their spiriting silently, might fancy myself in the castle of some enchanter. Nor was the illusion dispelled until I had quitted the mansion and was upon my road to Dinapore; for, in exploring the different chambers which led to the one in which I was to repose for the night, it was impossible to banish the recollection of those numerous errant dames in white muslin, whose

adventures, in long galleries and interminable suites of deserted rooms, had charmed my fancy in days long past. Unlike the ladies of romance, however, I enjoyed profound repose, and rather unwillingly obeyed the summons of the old sirdar, who knocked at my door to acquaint me that it was time to rise. I quitted Arrah with an indelible impression on my mind ; but can never hope to convey to my readers the effect produced by its wild tales and gorgeous scenery.

own residence, and associating with natives, it is said that he adopts the Asiatic costume; but while visiting a large military station, in company with the resident of Lucknow, he wore a blue surtout, resembling the undress uniform of the British army, but profusely ornamented with silk lace.

Colonel Gardiner, who is a connexion of the noble family bearing that name, came out to India in the King's service, which he soon afterwards quitted. The cause of his resignation is variously related; and in the absence of an authentic account, it would, perhaps, be wrong to give sanction to any one of the reports afloat concerning it. At this period, it was impossible to foresee that the tide of fortune would bring the British Government of India into actual warfare with the sovereigns of provinces so far beyond the frontier, that human ambition dared not contemplate their subjugation. Many loyal men were, therefore, induced to follow the banners of native princes, under the expectation that they never could be called upon to bear arms against their own country; but fate decreed it otherwise, and, in the Mahratta war, those officers who had entered into Holkar's service found themselves in a very awkward predicament, especially as they were not

permitted a choice, or even allowed to remain neutral, their new masters endeavouring to force them, upon pain of death, to commit treason to the land of their birth, by fighting in the ranks of a hostile force.

In some of the native courts, the English were immediately put to death upon the approach of the enemy, or on the slightest suspicion of their fidelity. Upon more than one occasion, Colonel Gardiner, who, independent of his military skill, possessed a thorough knowledge of the native character and very considerable talent, penetrated the designs of his employers, and withdrew in time from meditated treachery; but his escape from Holkar was of the most hazardous description, not inferior in picturesque incident and personal jeopardy to that of the renowned Dugald Dalgetty, who was not more successful in all lawful strategy than the subject of this too brief memoir.

Anxious to secure the services of so efficient an officer, after all fair means had failed, Holkar tied his prisoner to a gun, and threatened him with immediate destruction should he persist in refusing to take the field with his army. The Colonel remained staunch, and, perchance in the hope of tiring him out, the execution was suspended, and

he was placed under a guard, who had orders never to quit him for a single instant. Walking one day along the edge of a bank leading by a precipitous descent to a river, Colonel Gardiner suddenly determined to make a bold effort to escape, and perceiving a place fitted to his purpose, he shouted out *bismillah!* 'in the name of God!' and flung himself down an abyss of some forty or fifty feet deep. None were inclined to follow him, but guns were fired, and an alarm sounded in the town. He recovered his feet, and making for the river, plunged into it; after swimming for some distance, finding that his pursuers gained upon him, he took shelter in a friendly covert, and with merely his mouth above the water, waited until they had passed; he then landed on the opposite side, and proceeded by unfrequented paths to a town in the neighbourhood, which was under the command of a friend, who, though a native, and a servant of Holkar, he thought would afford him protection. This man proved trustworthy, and after remaining concealed some time, the colonel ventured out in the disguise of a grass-cutter, and reaching the British outposts in safety, was joyously received by his countrymen. He was appointed to the command of a regiment of irregular horse, which

he still retains ; and his services in the field, at the head of these brave soldiers, have not been more advantageous to the British Government, than the accurate acquaintance before-mentioned, which his long and intimate association with natives enabled him to obtain of the Asiatic character. It was to his diplomatic skill and knowledge of the best methods of treaty, that we owed the capitulation of one of those formidable hill-fortresses (Komulmair, in Mewar), whose reduction by arms would have been at the expense of an immense sacrifice of human life. The commandant of the division despatched to take possession of it, wearied out by the procrastinating and indecisive spirit of the natives, would have stormed the place at every disadvantage, had not Colonel Gardiner persuaded him to entrust the negotiation to his hands. The result proved that he had made a just estimate of his own powers : the garrison agreed to give up the fortress on the payment of their arrears ; and Colonel Tod, in his *Annals of Rajast'han*, mentions the circumstance as one highly honourable to the British character, that, there being not more than four thousand rupees at the time in the English camp, an order, written by the commandant for the remainder, upon the *shroffs* or

bankers in the neighbourhood, was taken without the least hesitation, the natives not having the slightest doubt that it would be paid upon presentation.*

* The above passage is preserved entire for the purpose of retaining an anecdote, which shews the impression made by British faith in India, and to afford an opportunity of apologizing to Colonel Tod for having inadvertently sought to deprive him of one of his laurels. In a conversation with an officer who served at Komulmair, he mentioned the circumstance of its capitulation, in consequence of Colonel Gardiner's adroit method of dealing with the natives, as a story current in the camp; and not having Colonel Tod's work upon Rajast'han at hand to refer to, the writer told the tale as it was told to her, unaware that the gallant and learned author was in command at the time. There is no British name connected with India for which she entertains so high a respect, and no history of the country to which she has been so deeply indebted for sources of amusement and information. In justification of herself, she can only observe, that she stated in the commencement of her account of two very remarkable personages, that the whole of the details rested upon hearsay evidence; the chapter was originally written with a view to induce Colonel Gardiner to come forward with an autobiography full of enterprize and interest, which would correct any misstatements made under circumstances so adverse to the collection of authentic information; and she can scarcely regret an inaccuracy which could not detract from Colonel Tod's high reputation, since it has drawn from his pen the clever article which appeared in a late number of the *Asiatic Journal*.

The marriage of Colonel Gardiner forms one of the most singular incidents in his romantic story. In the midst of his hazardous career, he carried off a Mahomedan princess, the sister of one of the lesser potentates of the Deccan, who, though now reduced to comparative insignificance, during the rise and progress of the Mahrattas, were personages of considerable consequence.

Ever the first to climb a tower,
As venturous in a lady's bower,

the sacred recesses of the zenana were penetrated by the enterprising lover, who, at the moment in which his life was threatened by the brother's treachery, bore away his prize in triumph, and sought an asylum in another court.

An European, of popular manners and military experience, could in those days easily place himself at the head of a formidable body of soldiers, ready to follow his fortunes, and trusting to his arrangements with the princes whose cause he supported for their pay, which was frequently in arrear, or dependent upon the capture of some rich province. In the command of such a troop, Colonel Gardiner was a welcome guest wherever he went, and, until the affair with Holkar, he had

always contrived to secure his retreat whenever it was prudent to commence a new career in another quarter.

It is difficult to say what sort of bridal contract is gone through between a Moslem beauty and a Christian gentleman, but the ceremony is supposed to be binding; at least it is considered so in India, a native female not losing the respect of her associates by forming such a connexion. The marriage of Colonel Gardiner seems perfectly satisfactory to the people of Hindostan, for the lady has not only continued stedfast in the Mahomedan faith, and in the strict observance of all the restrictions prescribed to Asiatic females of rank, but has brought up her daughters in the same religious persuasion, and in the same profound seclusion,—points seldom conceded by an European father. They are, therefore, eligible to match with the princes of the land, their mother's family connexions and high descent atoning for the disadvantage of foreign ancestry upon the paternal side. Educated according to the most approved fashion of an oriental court, they are destined to spend the remainder of their lives in the zenana; and this choice for her daughters shews that their mother, at least, does not consider exclusion from the

world, in which European women reign and revel, to be any hardship.

So little of the spirit of adventure is now stirring in India, that the Misses Gardiner, or the young Begums, or whatsoever appellation it may be most proper to designate them by, have not attracted the attention of the enterprising portion of the European community. Doubtless their beauty and accomplishments are blazoned in native society, but, excepting upon the occasion of an announcement like that referred to in the Calcutta periodicals, the existence of these ladies is scarcely known to their father's countrymen residing in India. We are ignorant whether their complexions partake most of the eastern or of the northern hue, or whether they have the slightest idea of the privileges from which their mother's adherence to Mahomedan usages has debarred them. Their situation, singular as it may appear in England, excites little or no interest; nobody seems to lament that they were not brought up in the Christian religion, or permitted those advantages which the half-caste offspring of women of lower rank enjoy; and, acquainted with the circumstances of the case, the editors of the aforesaid periodicals do not enter into any explanation of intelligence of the

most startling nature to English readers, who, in their ignorance of facts, are apt to fancy that European ladies in India are willing to enter into the zenanas of native princes.

Colonel Gardiner has of course adopted a great many of the opinions and ideas of the people with whom he has passed so great a portion of his time, and in his mode of living he may be termed half an Asiatic; this, however, does not prevent him from being a most acceptable companion to the European residents, who take the greatest delight in his society whenever he appears amongst them. His autobiography would be a work of the highest value, affording a picture of Indian policy, with which few besides himself have ever had an opportunity of becoming so intimately acquainted. As he is still in the prime and vigour of existence, we may hope that some such employment of these "piping times of peace" may be suggested to him, and that he may be induced to devote the hours spent in retirement at Khasgunje to the writing or the dictation of the incidents of his early life.

From a personal narrative of this nature, we should become acquainted with the *Condottieri*, if they may so be styled, of India and obtain an insight into all the complicated systems of intrigue and

espionage so necessary to secure the interests of those splendid mercenaries. Colonel Gardiner had a native follower attached to his service, whose exploits were of the most daring and romantic character—a one-eyed fellow, persons who in India are supposed to be compensated for the defect in their vision, by a double allowance of sagacity. This man smoked his pipe in the tent of the Pindarree chief, the night before the British troops put his forces to the rout, and captured his women and baggage. Had the authorities consented to act upon the intelligence brought by this accomplished spy, the camp might have been more effectually surprised, and the leader himself taken; but though the event proved that the information communicated by Colonel Gardiner was correct, the fidelity of his emissary was either distrusted, or the commandant did not choose to owe success to a person of his description.

In looking back upon past events, the colonel occasionally expresses a regret that he should have been induced to quit the King's service, in which, in all probability, he would have attained the highest rank ; but, eminently qualified for the situation in which he has been placed, and more than reconciled to the destiny which binds him to a

foreign soil, the station he occupies leaves him little to desire, and he has it in his power to be still farther useful to society by unlocking the stores of a mind fraught with information of the highest interest.

The life of the Begum Sumroo presents a more extraordinary tissue of events, extraordinary even in Asiatic annals, notwithstanding the numerous stepping-stones to wealth and power which were offered to the enterprising in the wild and troublous periods of Indian misrule. In early youth, this singular woman attached herself to a German adventurer, called by the natives Sumroo; but whether this appellation was a corruption of Summers, a name he is said to have taken upon his entrance into the Company's service, or of a *soubriquet* supposed to have been bestowed upon him on account of his gloomy and saturnine aspect, is not known; both versions of the story being equally current in India. This man commenced his career in the East as a private soldier in the English army, from which he speedily deserted, and made his way to the Upper Provinces. He is described as a low-born, uneducated person, so illiterate as not to be able to write his own name. He possessed talents, however, which recommended him to the notice of

Cossim Ali, nawaub of Bengal, who took him into favour, and gave him the command of his army. While in the service of this prince, Sumroo perpetrated a deed which stamped his name with indelible infamy. Inviting the English residents at Patna to his table, while partaking with the most unreserved confidence of the banquet, he gave a signal for a general massacre, and not one escaped the assassin's dagger. This act of perfidy proved as useless as it had been base and treacherous; the Company's troops under Major Adams speedily recaptured the city, and soon afterwards the entire conquest of Bengal obliged Cossim Ali and his followers to seek refuge at the court of Sujah Dowlah, Nawab Vizier of Oude. During the remainder of his life, English officers had often the mortification of seeing this renegade basking in the sunshine of favour at the courts of native princes; and though, as their star prevailed, he was compelled to try his fortune in more distant scenes, his prosperity daily increased. He established himself at the head of a considerable force, who were attached to his person, and wanted nothing but pay to be exceedingly effective. Finding it difficult to satisfy them or their leader, Nudjift Khan put him into possession of a very considerable *jaghire*, or

rather a small principality, in the province of Delhi, which the Begum retains to this day.

Sumroo died in 1776, and, at his decease, the corps which he had raised was kept up in the name of his son, though the chief authority fell into the hands of the extraordinary woman who has since made so conspicuous a figure in Hindostan. The origin of Zaib ul Nissa (ornament of her sex), a name which, as well as the title of *Begum*, was conferred upon her by the King of Delhi, is not known. By some persons it is said that she was a dancing-girl; and many are of opinion that she was a Cashmerian by birth, an idea which has arisen from the remarkable fairness of her complexion. But though this is not a common circumstance amongst the natives of Hindostan, instances are sufficiently frequent to render it very possible that she was born at Agra, the place in which she attached herself to the fortunes of Sumroo.

There can be no doubt that the Begum possessed a more than ordinary share of personal charms, for, at an advanced age, the remains were very striking. She is rather under the middle size, delicately formed, with fine-chiselled features, brilliant hazel eyes, a complexion very little darker than that of an Italian, and hands, arms, and feet

which Zoffani, the painter, declared to be models of beauty. Of these, though now grown fat and wrinkled, she is still justly proud.

It is well known that, while apparently excluded from all share of authority, women in India in reality often obtain unlimited sway over their husbands' property. Little or nothing is said of Sumroo's son, but his widow, as she is called, speedily became a person of great importance. By some of her contemporaries it is averred that, at a very early period of life, "her highness" became a convert to the Roman Catholic faith, which she now professes, and that she was married to the German by the forms of that church; others seem to think these circumstances doubtful, and are of opinion that, like many Mahomedan women living with Europeans, she for a long period retained her own religion, though considering herself as much the wife of her protector as if he had fulfilled all the ceremonial of the Moslem contract.

After the death of Sumroo, the Begum entered into another matrimonial engagement with a French adventurer, a Monsieur L'Oiseaux, or Le Vassu, who had been in the Mahratta service, under General Perron, and was afterwards employed by her as

commander-in-chief of the troops belonging to her *jaghire*. Like many widows, the lady soon discovered that she had committed a grievous error in the choice of a second husband; but there are very few who could extricate themselves so boldly and artfully from the entanglement. The cause of the Begum's earnest desire to get rid of her new lord is variously related; but, in all probability, those persons are right who have attributed it to the desire which the Frenchman manifested to return to Europe.

Native women of rank and wealth are well aware that they will lose all their consequence in a foreign country, and they usually make it a *sine quâ non*, that those whom they espouse shall agree to spend the remainder of their days in India. Naturally alarmed at a proposition which seemed to be dictated by the purest selfishness, and which assured her that she was indebted for her husband to the wealth she had amassed, and which he now desired to lavish amongst strangers to her, by whom she would be regarded as an object of contempt, she made no outward opposition, but, dissembling deeply, determined to circumvent a plan which threatened to be so injurious to her interests.

Le Vassu was no match in diplomatic arts for

his subtle wife; she pretended to enter with the greatest readiness into the scheme, but conjured him to keep his intentions secret, lest the troops, exasperated by the abandonment of their chief, should endeavour to detain them by force. While apparently engaged with the greatest alacrity in the collection of the gold and jewels which he proposed to carry along with him, she employed various emissaries to inflame the minds of the people against the Frenchman, and to represent his intended desertion in the most odious colours. These agents took care to contrast her love and devotion to the interests of those over whom she had been placed, with her husband's base betrayal of their confidence; and when every thing was prepared according to her wishes, she alarmed Le Vassu with rumours of an intended revolt. She assured him that there would be the greatest difficulty in effecting their escape from a highly-excited people, who had resolved upon their destruction should they be taken in the act of quitting the province, and declaring her determination never to survive the disgrace of a capture, she represented the horrors which would ensue in such a glowing manner, and worked so strongly upon the imagination of her husband, that he agreed to follow her example,

promising to kill himself should their party be insufficient to quell the insurgents.

Having made these arrangements, they set forward on their journey, attended by a strong escort, and each being provided with pistols, which the lady well knew how to use. At the appointed spot, the escort was attacked, or apparently attacked, by a party in the Begum's interest; the guards were put to the rout, and the fugitives seemed to be completely in the power of their supposed enemies. There was a great deal of confusion, and, amid several reports of musketry, news was brought to the bewildered Frenchman, that the Begum had shot herself. He instantly dismounted from his elephant, and rushing to her palanquin, found the attendants in great affliction and disorder; these people confirmed the fatal intelligence, giving as a proof the lady's veil saturated with blood. Knowing the resolute disposition of his wife, he concluded from this act of despair that all was lost; and destitute of the resources of a strong mind, and unsuspecting of double-dealing, he saved his enemy from the guilt of his actual murder, by putting a pistol to his head.

The Begum, taking care to have better information than her luckless spouse, the moment his death

was ascertained, threw open the doors of her palanquin, and mounting an elephant, addressed the troops in eloquent and impassioned language, descanting upon the affection she bore to the people bequeathed to her care by their former chief, her opposition to the wishes of the dastard who would have plundered and left them, and her determination to live and die in the discharge of the important duties which she was called upon to perform.

Until this moment, it is said, she had never appeared in public; but the exigency of the case excused her assumption of masculine rights. Her appeal to the soldiers was received with the greatest enthusiasm, and they conveyed her back to camp with shouts and acclamations. From that period she publicly exercised all the rights of a sovereign, and has retained undisputed possession of her authority. Officers formerly attached to the Marhatta service relate that they have seen her in the zenith of her beauty, leading on her troops in person, and manifesting, in the midst of the most frightful carnage, the reckless intrepidity which seems only to belong to the other sex.

Upon one of these occasions, during the reign of Shah Alum, she is said to have saved the Mogul

empire, by rallying and encouraging her troops, when those of the king were flying before the enemy. It is certain that she performed good service, and its reward was proportionate. The emperor created her a princess, or *begum*, in her own right, exalting her to a rank only second to that of the imperial family. Linking her fortunes with those of Delhi, she, with her usual foresight, shewed herself favourable to the English interests; and, in the treaties of 1805, adroitly managed to have her territories not only confirmed to her, but exempted from the jurisdiction of the civil power, greatly, it is said, to the obstruction of all executive measures of police.

The internal management of her estate, however, renders her independence less objectionable, since she contrives to keep her subjects in excellent order, and to render the revenues extremely productive.

The town of Seerdhuna, the capital of her district, is populous and flourishing; her fields, according to common report, look greener, and her peasantry more contented, than those of native states, or even of the Company's provinces in her neighbourhood. She maintains a body of troops for the protection of her own person and the

collection of the revenue, besides the quota she is required to furnish to assist in the performance of the police duties at Meerut. These soldiers are under the command of officers of European descent; but, to judge from the accounts which sometimes appear in the Calcutta papers of the abject nature of their enforced subservience to the will of an imperious and arbitrary woman, they cannot be of a very high grade.

The Begum's troops, who are principally Rajpoots,—tall stout men, but, like all the retainers of native princes, of haughty and insolent demeanour,—are clad in uniforms of dark-blue broadcloth, loose vests, reaching nearly to the feet, and fastened round the waist with scarlet cummurbunds; their turbans are of the same colour, and they are well armed and mounted. Her highness has also a park of artillery in very excellent order; and altogether does not make a contemptible appearance in the field.

The siege of Bhurtpore revived all the military ardour of the Begum, who was very desirous to appear before the place in person, and to obtain some share of the glory and the prize-money. The commander-in-chief, who did not think her hand-

ful of retainers of much importance, endeavoured to reconcile the amazon to her exclusion, by offering to place the holy city of Muttra under her charge ; but, observing that, if not seen at the post of danger, the people of Hindostan would say she had grown cowardly in her old age, she pitched her tents in the neighbourhood of the head-quarter's camp, and carried her point so far as at least to have the honour of being present at the capture of the fortress.

The revenues of the Begum are estimated at ten lacs, or £100,000 sterling, and she is supposed to be in the possession of immense treasures amassed during a very long and prosperous life. The principality of which she is the sovereign is about twenty miles long, twelve broad, and seventy in circumference. Her palace is built in the European fashion, and she has also erected a church there, after the model of St. Peter's at Rome. Both the design and execution of this cathedral are very beautiful ; the altar of white marble, brought from Jyepore, and inlaid with cornelians and agates of various colours, being particularly rich and splendid. The gardens at Seerdhuna are celebrated for their fruit-trees, and especially for the groves of oranges,

lemons, and citrons, which perfume the air with their blossoms, and weigh down the branches with their golden treasures.

The Begum also possesses a mansion at Delhi, which was formerly her favourite place of residence; it is situated at the upper end of the Chaudry Chowk, and crowns an eminence in the centre of a spacious and stately garden, laid out according to the prevailing fashion of the East. Its parterres are thickly planted with the choicest fruits and flowers, and it is traversed by avenues of superb cypresses, whose luxuriant though melancholy beauty atones for the formality of their appearance. During the period of Lord Lake's sojourn at Delhi, and for many subsequent years, the Begum was wont to give superb entertainments, and to receive the highest marks of respect from her European visitors. She has probably been a little spoiled by flattery, and has acquired rather too inflated a notion of her own political importance, since it is said that, on her excursions to Delhi, during the latter years of her life, she did not pay the usual tribute of homage to the resident, of a visit, which, as the representative of the British Government, he has a right to expect from all persons of inferior rank.

The omission, in process of time, was reported to the supreme authorities at Calcutta, and the Begum, duly admonished, proceeded in form to the residency, though with a very ill-grace. In fact, her pride was so deeply hurt by this enforced concession, that she speedily turned her back upon Delhi, declaring at her departure that she would never enter its walls again. She has kept her word, residing at places in which her dignity is not lowered by the presence of so high a functionary. Her palace at Seerdhuna is under the same ban, though not from the same cause. Some of her astrologers have predicted that her return will be marked by her death; and, though long past the usual period of existence, she has not the least desire to be gathered to her forefathers, and, in avoiding the fatal spot, hopes to retard her doom. She is building a house at Kinwah, about eleven miles distant from the capital of her fief, and possesses one at Bhurtpore, and another in the neighbourhood of Meerut, outside the cantonments, which is now her principal residence. Here she gives splendid entertainments, particularly to the great personages who travel in that direction. She has long since abandoned the restrictions imposed by Asiatic prejudice, and sits at table with

large parties of gentlemen without scruple. She formerly attended to the Mohammedan precepts as far as they related to the preparation of food ; but, having once passed the rubicon, she refused to return to her trammels again, not even following the example of the English ladies, when they retired from table, but preferring to remain with the gentlemen, on the plea that she made it a point never to leave her “ pipe half-smoked.”

The dress of the Begum differs in some degree from that of other Hindostanee ladies, her highness choosing to substitute a turban for the veil invariably worn by the females of her country ; a circumstance which, though apparently trifling, shews that she entertains little or no regard for native opinions and prejudices, the turban being only assumed by dancing-girls during some performances which are considered highly indecorous, and are not exhibited before ladies. The Begum's costume usually consists of a short full petticoat of rich stuff, which displays a few inches of her gold or silver brocaded trowsers. The *coortee* and under-garment are similar to those worn by other ladies, and she throws a shawl over her turban, which envelops her throat, arms, and shoulders, in the muffling though not ungraceful manner in

which the veil is worn in India. Her slippers are as bright and as small as those of Cinderella, and notwithstanding the near approach of her eightieth year, are displayed with a considerable degree of coquetry. She smokes out of a magnificent hookah, and upon most occasions is decorated with a prodigious quantity of jewels.

The property of every kind, which this fortunate adventurer has accumulated, is immense ; her stud of horses is one of the finest in Hindostan, and she drives about in a carriage-and-four of English fashion and Calcutta build, which boasts, or at least did boast when it was first launched, a high degree of splendour. It is a large, bright-yellow coach, with silver mouldings, the window-frames of solid silver, and the lace and hangings, which are very rich and substantial, also of silver, with splendid bullion tassels ; the lining is of violet-coloured satin, embroidered all over with silver stars, and the postillions are in dark blue and silver liveries.

The Begum, during her latter years, has frequently sat for her portrait to a native artist, who takes excellent likenesses, and having had the advantage of European instruction, has made considerable progress in the art. One of these, a minia-

ture, is in the possession of Lord Combermere, for whom her highness professed the warmest degree of friendship. In former days, our Indian Catherine was distinguished for elegance and grace; and whenever she had a point to carry, she employed such captivating and fascinating arts, that she seldom failed to succeed. She does not speak any language except Hindoostanee, and her increasing years and infirmities have reduced the beautiful and dignified heroine of a thousand fields, to a decrepid old woman, who is still, however, courteous and polite, and not insensible to the homage formerly so freely rendered, but which now seems only to proceed from a sentiment of pity, or a love of the ridiculous.

Unhappily, the character of the Begum is stained with cruelties of so deep a dye, that respect for her talents is merged in abhorrence for her crimes. The natives say, that she was born a politician, that she has allies every where, and friends no where, and there is much truth in these assertions: for, though liberal to her dependants, she is accounted a severe mistress, and, before the occupation of the neighbouring provinces by the British Government, did not scruple to commit atrocities of the most frightful nature. The darkest stories are

circulated of murders perpetrated by her order, and in her own presence ; some of her subjects she is said to have impaled alive, and others barbarously mutilated. But the most shocking tale is connected with a fertile cause of female cruelty and revenge. She became jealous of one of the females of her household, and, not satisfied with depriving her of existence, prolonged her sufferings and rejoiced over them with a savage barbarity, which can only be compared to the sanguine ferocity of the tigress, tearing and torturing her prey before she gives it the final stroke. The unfortunate girl was buried alive under the floor of the apartment occupied by her mistress, who slept upon the spot in order to feast her ears with the dying groans of her victim, and to prevent the possibility of a rescue ; the whole establishment compassionating the fate of the hapless creature who had fallen under the clutch of so relentless a monster.

The seclusion in which Hindoostanee women are obliged to live is not favourable to the formation of the female character, nor does it tend to soften and improve the heart. Women of strong feelings, for want of other excitement, are apt to exercise the most wanton cruelties upon their dependants, and the zenana is frequently a scene of the greatest

misery. The slave-girls of the princesses of Delhi have been known to escape from the palace and fly to the British residency for protection ; and surrounded by such examples, and armed with absolute power, it is not surprising that a woman of so determined a character as the Begum Sumroo should have exceeded all her cotemporaries in the recklessness with which she indulged her hatred against those who had the misfortune to offend her.

The Begum's first husband, the founder of her fortunes, is buried at Agra. She, herself, is said never to have had a child ! But the son, mentioned as the successor to the *jaghire*, of whom nothing in India seems to be known, certainly left some offspring, who have formed alliances with Europeans and Indo-Britons. The Calcutta papers, of October 1881, announced the marriages of two gentlemen, John Rose Troup, Esq., and Monsieur Peter Paul Mari Le Caroli, with the daughters of Colonel George Alexander Dyce, great grand-daughters of the Begum Sumroo. The ceremony was performed in the cathedral of Sancta Maria, at Seerdhuna, by the padre Julius Cæsar, and that of Mr. Troup was afterwards celebrated a second time at the Begum's palace, by the protestant chaplain of Meerut.

Several priests of the Roman Catholic persuasion

are settled at Seerdhuna, and their influence over the Begum, which is said to be very considerable, will, it is to be hoped, lead to a deeper sense of her misdeeds than that self-satisfied old lady appears at present to entertain. She could scarcely be in better hands than those of father Julius Cæsar, who realizes the most beautiful ideas which could be formed of a Christian minister. Destitute of ambitious hopes, and debarred from those ties of kindred and affection which tend to reconcile the protestant clergy to a residence on a foreign shore, he devotes all his time and thoughts to the preservation and enlargement of his little flock. Though occasionally to be found at Seerdhuna and other places where a Catholic community is assembled, his residence is in the city of Patna, where he has a small congregation. He is the only European who has ever taken up his abode within the walls since the cold-blooded massacre which took place in 1764, and he is universally respected by the natives, who regard with great veneration those persons belonging to the priesthood who act up to their clerical profession, whatever their religious opinions may be.

In times of expected irritation or tumult, the services of the padre are frequently called for in aid

of the civil authorities, and he is always ready to employ his influence in the promotion of any good work. His talents and amiable character render him a welcome and an honoured guest at the houses of the British residents at Bankipore, a civil station in his immediate neighbourhood; and Bishop Heber seems scarcely to have done justice to this excellent man, in ascribing his popularity to the smoothness of his manners and his tact in administering to the self-love of his associates. Father Julius Cæsar is a Franciscan friar, wearing the garb and practising the self-denial enjoined by his order, the products of his little cure being barely adequate to the support of a very humble establishment.

The Begum's court at Seerdhuna has been the asylum of European adventurers of various ranks, who, disappointed of the golden harvest which they had hoped to reap in the fertile fields of India, have been content to sit down for the remainder of their lives upon appointments which gave them more luxuries than they could command at home. Forming connexions with Asiatic women, or giving their children wholly up to the care of the natives, Seerdhuna has exhibited Europeans in a very singular position, having nothing of their father-land about them save the hue of their skin. Some English

gentlemen, sitting at table at Agra, were surprised by the appearance of a man, whose fair complexion, sandy whiskers, and peculiar physiognomy, announced him to belong to the Emerald Isle, but whose dress and language were purely Hindoostanee. With all the native volubility, he told the story of his wrongs, his unjust dismissal from the Begum's service, and his travels in search of redress or employment. Upon being questioned upon the subject of his parentage, he said that his father was an Irishman, but seemed to know nothing farther about the matter, and to be perfectly unaware of the astonishment which his Asiatic manners and habits would occasion to those with whom he was conversing. It is very seldom that transplantation to a foreign soil produces so complete a change in the immediate descendants of British exiles, though other Europeans, French people in particular, accommodate themselves more easily to the customs and usages of the people with whom they are destined to live. Some of the most respectable of the Begum's foreign retainers have been natives of France; her colonel-commandant, a gentleman named Peton, who resided at her court during a great many years, was very justly esteemed for his invariable good conduct and gentlemanly manners. Latterly, her

service has fallen into disrepute ; as the country has become tranquillized, the prospects of Europeans at native courts have become less brilliant, and as her highness does not offer very high emoluments, and there is no honour whatever to be gained in her employ, she is surrounded by half-castes, whose expectations are of a very limited nature, and who submit to treatment which would disgust persons of higher pretensions.

Either according to treaty, or in consequence of the Begum's gratitude for the protection she has experienced, she has made the British Government her heir, and, at her death, which in the course of nature must take place very shortly, the *jaghire* will be placed on the same footing as those under the Company's jurisdiction. The Begum is very liberal in her donations to public charities, and other popular institutions in Calcutta. After the death of her husband Sumroo, she kept up a monastery founded by him at Agra, for persons belonging to the Roman Catholic Church, of any country or nation, adding an establishment for nuns ; but whether many persons of either sex have availed themselves of this asylum we have little opportunity of knowing, since European travellers pass through Agrá without taking the

slightest interest in any of its minor features, and the greater number are quite content with casting a listless glance upon the buildings of note which are to be seen in the fort and the cantonments.

- The Begum exercises the almost boundless hospitality which native custom has prescribed to those who are placed at the head of a fief or large estate, entertaining the whole of the servants and camp-followers of parties of travellers, to whom she is desirous to pay respect and attention. The supply of firewood, ghee, grain, and sweetmeats, to the multifarious attendants of the ambulatory establishment of a great man, is a serious affair; but her highness always does the thing handsomely, and the people who are feasted at her expense have no cause to complain of the meagreness of their fare. Salutes of cannon are fired, and her troops are turned out, whenever her capital is visited by travellers of distinction, and while the retainers are furnished with the materials for a feast, the ladies and gentlemen are invited to her own table, sumptuously covered at breakfast and dinner, the banquet being followed by *nautching* and fire-works.

CHAPTER VI.

D E L H I.

THERE is no place in British India which the intellectual traveller approaches with feelings more strongly excited than the ancient seat of the Mogul empire. The proud towers of Delhi, with its venerable reliques of Hindoo architecture, its splendid monuments of Moslem power, and its striking indications of Christian supremacy, cannot fail to impress the mind with sensations of mingled awe, wonder, and delight. In no other part of our Eastern possessions do the natives shew so earnest a desire to imitate European fashions ; and though, at present, the mixture, in which convenience more than elegance is consulted, produces a grotesque effect, the total overthrow of many Oriental prejudices may be safely predicted from the tolerance of all sorts of innovations manifested at Delhi.

The modern capital of the Moslem kings, which is called by the natives *Shahjehanabad*, stands in the centre of a sandy plain, surrounded on every

side with the ruins of old Delhi, curiously contrasted with a new suburb, the villas belonging to Europeans attached to the residency, and with the cantonments lately erected for three regiments of sepoy. The celebrated gardens of Shalimar, with their cypress avenues, sparkling fountains, roseate bowers, and the delicious shade of their dark cedars, on which Shah Jehan, the most tasteful monarch in the world, is said to have lavished a *crore* of rupees (a million sterling), have been almost wholly surrendered to waste and desolation; the ravages of the Mahrattas have left few wrecks behind, and amidst these arise the palaces of the Christian rulers of the soil. A favourite retreat of Sir Charles Metcalfe, afterwards inhabited by Sir David Ochterlony, arrests the stranger's eye, as he seeks in vain to recognize, from the description handed down to us, the paradise of flowers and foliage which once adorned these arid tracts.

From the road which, it is said, formerly extended to Lahore, shaded all the way by the meeting branches of the mango trees, of which not a bough remains, the military cantonments appear, couched under a ridge of sand-stone rocks, called *Mejnoon Pahar*: some writers have likened this military array to an army in ambuscade, and the

rocky screen favours the idea. The loss of the rich umbrageous foliage of the tamarinds and cedars of Shah Jehan has been inadequately supplied by a foreign introduction before noticed, the *Parkinsonias*, which thrive in an arid soil, but which require the relief of leaves to soften the effect of their gaudy blossoms. They are, when planted in groups, quite as offensive to the eye as a grove entirely composed of laburnums in full flower would be ; yet, in the cantonments of Delhi and of Agra, little else is to be seen.

Modern Delhi, or Shahjehanabad, is enclosed by a splendid rampart of red granite, and entered by gateways the most magnificent which the world can boast. The walls were formerly so lofty as to conceal all save the highest towers ; but these dead blanks, with their flanking turrets, like the eyries of the eagle, high in air, have been exchanged for low ramparts strengthened by massive bastions. From the outside the view is splendid ; domes and mosques, cupolas and minarets, with the imperial palace frowning like a mountain of red granite, appear in the midst of groves of clustering trees, so thickly planted that the buildings have been compared, in Oriental imagery, to rocks of pearls and rubies, rising from an emerald sea. In approach-

ing the city from the east bank of the Jumna, the prospect realizes all that the imagination has pictured of Oriental magnificence; mosques and minarets glittering in the sun, some garlanded with wild creepers, others arrayed in all the pomp of gold, the exterior of the cupolas being covered with brilliant metal, and from Mount Mejnoon, over which a fine road now passes, the shining waters of the Jumna gleaming in the distance, insulating Selimgurh, and disappearing behind the halls of the peacock-throne, the palace of the emperors, add another beautiful feature to the scene. It is well known that the line, quoted by Mr. Moore, in *Lalla Rookh*,—

Oh! if there be an Elysium on earth,
It is this, it is this!—

is to be found in the audience-chamber of the King of Delhi; and though the glory of the Moghuls has faded away, and their greatness departed, the superb edifices and luxuriant gardens of this splendid capital would still render it an Eden of delight, were it not for one terrible drawback, the besetting sin of all Indian cities,—dust. In Delhi, this plague is suffocating, choking, stifling, blinding, smothering,—in fact, perfectly unbearable. The visitors see all they can see in as short a time as

possible, and hasten away to some retreat, where the parched and thirsty ground is watered, and where they may respire freely, without being forced to inhale some ounces of commingled sand and dirt whenever they venture to open their lips.

The Chandery Choke, or principal street, is wide and handsome, one of the broadest avenues to be found in an Indian city. The houses are of various styles of architecture, partaking occasionally of the prevailing fashions of the west; Grecian piazzas, porticos, and pediments, are not unfrequently found fronting the dwellings of the Moslem or Hindoo; balconies are, of course, very common, and form the favourite resort of the gentlemen of the family, who, in a loose deshabelle of white muslin, enjoy the pleasures of the *hookah*, while gazing on the passing crowd below, totally regardless of the dust which fills the air.

The shops are crowded with all sorts of European products and manufactures, and many of them display sign-boards, on which the names and occupations of the inhabitants are emblazoned in Roman characters—a novel circumstance in a native city. The introduction of this useful custom is attributed to Burruddeen Khan, an ingenious person patronized by the reigning emperor, Akbar the

second. This accomplished artist is celebrated for his seal-engravings, and so much delighted his royal master by the specimens he produced, in cutting gems with the letters and devices of all nations, that he raised him to the rank of a noble, one of the few privileges still enjoyed by this shadow of a king. The English placards have a very curious appearance, mingled with the striped purdahs or curtains, which, in many instances, supply the place of doors, and the variegated screens, (where animals of blue, red, or yellow, sprawl upon a green ground) which shade the windows. The houses are, for the most part, white-washed, and the gaiety of their appearance is heightened by the carpets and shawls, strips of cloth of every hue, scarfs and coloured veils, which are hung out over the verandah or on the tops of houses to air, the sun in India being considered a great purifier, a dissipator of bad smells, and even a destroyer of vermin, though its claim to the latter quality must be equivocal.

The crowd of an Indian city, always picturesque, is here particularly rich in showy figures of men and animals; elephants, camels, and horses, gaily caparisoned, parade through the streets, jingling their silver ornaments, and the many-coloured tufts

and fringes with which they are adorned: the *suwarree* of a great personage sweeping along the highways, little scrupulous of the damage it may effect in its progress, forms a striking spectacle when it can be viewed from some safe corner or from the back of a tall elephant. The *coup d'œil* is magnificent; but to enter into details might destroy the illusion; for, mingled with mounted retainers, richly clothed, and armed with glittering helmets, polished spears, and shields knobbed with silver, crowds of wild-looking half-clad wretches on foot are to be seen, increasing the tumult and the dust, but adding nothing to the splendour of the cavalcade. No great man—and Delhi is full of personages of pretension,—ever passes along in state without having his titles shouted out by the stentorian lungs of some of his followers. The cries of the venders of different articles of food, the discordant songs of itinerant musicians, screamed out to the accompaniment of the tom-tom, with an occasional bass volunteered by a *chetah*, grumbling out in a sharp roar his annoyance at being hawked about the streets for sale, with the shrill distressful cry of the camel, the trumpetings of the elephants, the neighing of horses, and the grumbling of cart-wheels, are sounds which assail the ear from sun-

rise until sunset in the streets of Delhi. The multitude of equipages is exceedingly great, and more diversified, perhaps, than those of any other city in the world. English carriages, altered and improved to suit the climate and the peculiar taste of the possessor, are mingled with the palanquins and bullock-carts, open and covered, the chairs, and the cage-like and lanthorn-like conveyances, of native construction. Prince Baber, the second surviving son of the reigning monarch, drives about in an English chariot drawn by eight horses, in which he frequently appears attired in the full-dress uniform of a British general officer, rendered still more striking by having each breast adorned with the grand cross of the Bath. Mirza Salem, another of the princes of the imperial family, escorts a favourite wife in a carriage of the same description; the lady is said to be very beautiful, but the blinds are too closely shut to allow the anxious crowd a glimpse of her charms. Regular English coaches, drawn by four horses, and driven by postillions, the property of rich natives, appear on the public drives and at reviews; and occasionally a buggy or cabriolet of a very splendid description may be seen, having the hood of black velvet, embroidered with gold. The *chetahs*

and hunting-leopards, before-mentioned, are led hooded through the streets; birds in cages, Persian cats, and Persian greyhounds are also exposed in the streets for sale, under the superintendence of some of those fine, tall, splendid-looking men, who bring all sorts of merchandize from Cashmere, Persia, and Thibet to the cities of Hindostan—an almost gigantic race, bearing a noble aspect in spite of the squalidness of their attire, and having dark, clear complexions, without a tinge of swarthinness. Beggars in plenty infest the streets; and, in addition to the multitudes brought together by business, there are idle groups of loungers—Mussulmans of lazy, dissipated, depraved habits, gaudily decked out in flaunting colours, with their hair frizzled in a bush from under a glittering skull-cap, stuck rakishly at the side of the head.

Such are a few of the distinguishing features of Chandery Choke, which abounds in hardware, cloth, *pāān*, and pastry-cooks' shops, the business, as usual, carried on in the open air, with all the chaffering, haggling, and noise common to Asiatic dealings. How any thing of the kind is managed, amidst the bustle and confusion of the streets, the throng of bullock-carts, the strings of loaded camels, the squadrons of wild, vicious horses, the

trains of elephants, and the insolent retainers of great men, only intent upon displaying their own and their master's consequence, by increasing the uproar, seems astonishing. The natives of India form an extraordinary compound of apathy and vivacity. In the midst of noises and tumult, which would stun or distract the most iron-nerved European in the world, they will maintain an imperturbable calmness; while, in ordinary matters, where there appears to be nothing to disturb their equanimity, they will vociferate and gesticulate as if noise and commotion were absolutely essential to their happiness. By a very little attention to order and comfort, the Chandery Choke might be rendered one of the most delightful promenades in the world; the famous canal of Delhi, shaded by fine trees, runs down the centre, and nothing could be more easy than to allay the clouds of dust, at present so intolerable, by keeping the avenues on either side well watered.

This canal, originally the work of Feroze Shah, forms the only supply of wholesome water which the inhabitants of Delhi are enabled to obtain. Sharing the fate of the Patan empire, it became neglected, and was at length wholly choked up, remaining in this state for more than a hundred

years. The canal was re-opened by Ali Merdan Khan, a Persian nobleman attached to the court of the Emperor Shah Jehan, but was again dried up and remained useless until the establishment of the British government; which, anxious to display its paternal care, and wishing to confer a solid and lasting benefit upon the people of the city, determined upon repairing this splendid work. An undertaking of such magnitude occupied a considerable period; it required three years of unremitting labour to complete it, and the expense was enormous. At length, in 1820, during the administration of Sir Charles Metcalfe, the whole was finished. All the inhabitants of the city, in a tumult of joy, went out to greet the approaching waters, shouting *Io-peans* to the government which gave them the long-desired blessing, and casting garlands of flowers, ghee, oil, and spices, into the stream refreshing their eyes, and giving such welcome promises of fertility and abundance. Fortunately, the present rulers of India are persevering as well as enterprising; for, in the course of a very few years, the canal again became dry, in consequence of a change in the channel of the Jumna, whose waters, flowing through another passage, no longer afforded the customary supply. The inhabitants

of Delhi, with the usual Asiatic absence of foresight, had neglected the wells, which, previous to the opening of the canal, had furnished them, though inadequately, with the precious element. The expense of obtaining water for domestic purposes was heavy, and to many almost ruinous; the gardens became deserts, and the failure of the rains increased the distress. The sufferings thus occasioned were not of long duration; as soon as it was practicable, the engineer officer having the charge of the canal, repaired the mischief, and a second jubilee took place, attended by similar festivals and similar thanksgivings, than which nothing could have been more gratifying to the English inhabitants of the imperial city.

The palace of the residency, within the walls of modern Delhi or Shahjehanabad, formerly belonged to Ali Merdan Khan, the nobleman beforementioned. It is a large irregular building, which has been added to, and altered to suit the taste and convenience of its successive owners, the banqueting-rooms being the work of Sir David Ochterlony; some of the older apartments are adorned with elaborate ornaments, and rich Mosaic paintings; it has a large garden at the back, laid out with the stately formality which is the usual style of Orien-

tal pleasure-grounds, and the whole, though not particularly splendid, has a solemn and imposing air.

By strangers visiting Delhi, a presentation at the court of the fallen monarch is generally desired, though there are many Anglo-Indians who, with more than native apathy, pass through the city of the Moslem conquerors of India with as little interest in the great Moghul as they have been accustomed to take in his effigy, which is so unaccountably impressed upon a pack of cards. The imperial palace, erected by Shah Jehan, is a very noble building. The outer wall in front is sixty feet high, battlemented on the top, and adorned with small round towers; the gateways are magnificent. The whole is of red granite, surrounded by a moat, and, though only tenable against arrows and musquetry, has an air of strength and grandeur. The entrance is exceedingly fine; a lofty gothic arch, in the centre of the tower, which forms the portal, leads to a splendid vestibule, and through a vaulted colonnade, to the inner court. A second gateway leads to another quadrangle, in which the *dewanee khas*, or hall of audience, is situated. The throne or pavilion of the great Moghul is of white marble, beautifully carved, inlaid with gold,

and of curious construction. The roof, which was formerly vaulted with silver, is supported on richly decorated pillars; around the cornice is the celebrated inscription, "If there be a paradise upon earth, it is this, it is this!" The throne of marble, embellished with gilded ornaments, stands in the centre of this pavilion; it rises about three feet from the floor, and is canopied by a drapery of cloth of gold, bordered with seed-pearl; there are no steps in front, the monarch entering from the rear, with his sons and favoured courtiers, and the rest of the assemblage standing round on the pavement beneath. The quadrangle, in which this singular edifice is placed, is extremely handsome, surrounded by profusely-ornamented buildings, and adorned with flowers and fountains. The king is seated, cross-legged, upon cushions, and, except upon occasions of state, does not affect great splendour of attire, being frequently entirely wrapped up in shawls, and shewing only a few valuable jewels to the eager eyes of European strangers. The court is, in fact, shorn of all its grandeur, and the monarch, painfully conscious of his own degradation, can only be reconciled to the exhibition of himself, for the sake of the revenue afforded by the gold mohurs, which are offered as *nuxxurs* at every presentation.

The whole ceremonial of the reception at this once all-powerful court has dwindled away to a mere farce. Formerly, the distribution of the *khillauts*, or dresses of honour, was an affair of the greatest importance, and may, probably, still be considered so by the natives, amongst whom the dependent king yet maintains the shadow of his power. The personal rank and the degree of estimation in which the person receiving the gift is held, are decided by the number of articles and the value of the materials composing the *khillaut*: swords, with embroidered belts, the hilts and scabbards being of embossed silver, or set with precious stones, shields rimmed with silver, daggers richly ornamented, splendid turbans, shawls in pairs, cummerbunds and handkerchiefs, gold and silver muslins, Benares brocades, strings of pearls and other jewels, are comprehended in the *khillauts* given to the favourites whom native monarchs delight to honour. Sometimes, these rich gifts will consist of a hundred and one articles; seventy-five is a more common, and five the lowest number; these last are always of inferior quality: the greater the quantity the more rich the materials, so that the cost and value may be calculated by the number bestowed. The investiture of *khillauts* takes place

in the king's presence, who, when desirous of paying a mark of peculiar respect, places a turban on the head of the favoured person; on other occasions, he merely touches the articles with his hand, and the rest of the ceremony is left to the officers of state. These magnificent presents are not wholly disinterested marks of sovereign beneficence: the individual who receives them is always expected to make an adequate return, and to present a *nuxsur* corresponding with his rank and the value of the kingly gift.

The *khillauts* presented at Delhi to the European visitants of the court are the merest frippery imaginable, and are said, with some appearance of truth, to be manufactured from the cast-off finery of the ladies of the *xenana*: wreaths of tinsel flowers, coarse silvered muslin, and still coarser shawls, with girdles and gewgaws of the most trumpery description, dear at the price of the few gold *mohurs* which are paid for them, are graciously bestowed upon the civil and military officers of the Company, who are required to masquerade in this barbarous finery, which is put on, or rather hung on, over their ordinary attire. An officer in full uniform, with a silver muslin tunic dangling from his shoulders, or arrayed in a robe of flowered

gauze stuck with tinsel and edged with faded ribbons, a flimsy scarf fluttering from his cocked hat, or a tiara of false stones encircling the plain round beaver of a civilian, are objects continually offered to the view of spectators, who must have very rigid countenances not to betray the ridicule which they excite. The custom now would be "more honoured in the breach than in the observance," it having become nothing more than a very absurd piece of formality, rendered as cheap as possible, in order to suit the purses of those who wish to make their salaam to the king. On visits of state, by functionaries of rank in the service, the expenses are paid by the Government; to private individuals repairing alone to the hall of audience, the cost is four gold *mohurs*, about eight pounds, not including a *khillaut*, which is only given on particular occasions, and forms an extra expense.

The court of Delhi is still a place of considerable political intrigue; the numerous native tributaries to the British Government have always points of great importance to themselves to settle, which they endeavour to obtain by those crooked paths of diplomacy which Asiatics delight to tread; and persons attached to the residency, from the highest to the lowest, are, directly or indirectly, assailed by

stimulants supposed to be all-powerful over every part of the East. The trade of Delhi is very extensive, particularly in shawls, for which it is a grand mart; a constant intercourse is kept up between this city and Cashmere, whence the splendid fabrics so much prized all over the civilized world are brought in immense quantities—some plain, to have borders sewed upon them, others to be embroidered in silk or gold, whence they derive the name of Delhi shawls. Nothing can exceed the beauty of the Delhi needle-work, which is in the highest esteem throughout Asia, and eagerly coveted by the rich of both sexes, the *caftans* of the men being often of velvet edged with rich embroidery. The goldsmiths are also celebrated beyond those of any other Indian city, and eminently merit their high reputation. It is difficult for persons, well acquainted with the *chef-d'œuvres* of European artisans, to imagine the surprising beauty of the Delhi work—the *champac* necklaces in particular, so called from the flower whose petals it resembles. They do not succeed so well in cutting and arranging precious stones, though they are improving very fast from the instructions native workmen now obtain when in the employment of English jewellers at Calcutta. There are a great many carvers of

stone and ivory in Delhi, but they have not attained to any thing approaching perfection in their art. A new and curious branch of Indian *bijouterie* has, however, sprung up, under the auspices of an English lady; it consists of ivory medallions, on which the principal buildings of the neighbourhood, the Kootub Minar, &c., are very delicately painted; these are set in gold, and worn as necklaces, or sent as presents by the fair portion of the European community, and, though not of much value, are both curious and ornamental.

The gratifications afforded by Delhi, as a station for Europeans, must depend entirely upon the tastes and pursuits of those to whom the chances of the service have made it a temporary abode; for, with the exception of a few persons, whose appointments may be considered to be fixed for life, a constant change is taking place in the society. The number of Europeans is not very great; and the amazing superiority in rank and station, possessed by the civilians over the military, produces a jealousy exceedingly inimical to social intercourse. A dearth of unmarried ladies is frequently a subject of complaint, and when this happens at a period in which no stranger of rank is a visitant to the imperial city, gaities of every kind are in a state of suspension.

Whenever any great person is passing through Delhi, the residency is always a scene of festivity to those who have not excluded themselves from its hospitalities through a dread of compromising their dignity by appearing to court the ruling powers, a prejudice which is the bane of society in India, and unfortunately fostered by the folly of a few vain-glorious civilians, who, however, form a very small proportion of the whole body. In a place like Delhi, where natives of rank fancy they consult their own interest in administering to the pride and vanity of their European rulers, a pompous, ostentatious official is rendered unbearable to all save the train of parasites such personages will always have about them. The entertainments given by the Resident are usually of a very magnificent description; the gardens are illuminated by coloured lamps, and the banquets have all the abundance considered so essential to splendour by the native purveyors.

Moosulman gentlemen of rank frequently give parties to the European visitants at Delhi, in which ladies are included, and at these, the *nautch* or dancing-girls are invariably introduced: the *prima donna*, named Alfina, is a very celebrated *artiste*, outscreeching all her contemporaries, and keeping

possession of the floor when vainly-aspiring rivals are desired to sit down. Sometimes five or six sets of these inharmonious vocalists appear together, all singing at the same time, after the fashion of a Dutch chorus, the natives not having an idea of making their voices accord with each other. The dancing, though not equally barbarous, is exceedingly tiresome, when, as in the presence of ladies, it is circumscribed within the bounds of propriety ; but there are some European gentlemen who acquire the native taste for an exhibition which, when addressed to male eyes alone, is said to be not particularly decorous.

The horror with which even those Asiatics who adopt foreign fashions in equipages and household furniture regard the manners and customs of the Europeans brought in close contact with them, is sometimes openly displayed by urgent remonstrances to those for whom they have contracted a friendship ; but this is nothing, compared to the expression of their disgust in private. In Delhi, the opinions entertained upon the subject are widely, though secretly, circulated through the medium of the native *ukhbars*, scandalous chronicles, very much resembling a few of our English newspapers, except that they are in manuscript :

the language is Persian, and the editors do not scruple to write at full length the names of those who are the subjects of the most atrocious libels. It is not very easy for an European to procure a sight of the animadversions passed upon the conduct of himself or his friends ; some artifice is requisite to obtain samples of the method employed to amuse the reading portion of the native community at the expense of persons differing so widely in the habits of their public and private life. As the writers are not very scrupulous in the language they use, there is not a little difficulty in making an extract, which will display the spirit of their comments, without shocking the eye by coarseness of expression. The following description of a European entertainment will convey some idea of the estimation in which such promiscuous meetings are held.

“ The *gentlemen of exalted dignity* had a great feast last night, to which all the military chiefs and lieutenants were invited. There was a little hog on the table, before Mr. —, who cut it in small pieces, and sent some to each of the party ; even the women ate of it. In their language, a pig is called *ham*. Having stuffed themselves with the unclean food, and many sorts of flesh, taking plenty

of wine, they made for some time a great noise, which doubtless arose from drunkenness. They all stood up two or four times, crying 'hip! hip!' and roared before they drank more wine. After dinner, they danced in their licentious manner, pulling about each other's wives." Here follows a bit of personal scandal: "Captain —, who is staying with Mr. —, went away with the latter's lady (arm-in-arm), the palanquins following behind, and they proceeded by themselves into the bungalow: the wittol remained at table, guzzling red wine." The uncourteous, ungracious manner, which too many Englishmen assume towards the natives, is touched off with truth and spirit in the following paragraph: "The Government has manifested singular want of sense in appointing Mr. — to be — at —. The man is a capacious blockhead, and very hot-tempered; he can do no business himself, yet he has the extreme folly to be angry when abler persons wish to do it for him. When the most respectable Hindoostanee gentlemen waited upon him yesterday, he just stood up, half-dressed, when they salaamed, and said, 'well, what do you want?' And when they answered 'only to pay our respects,' he growled out '*jow*' (go)." This sort of rudeness

is, indeed, but too common, and seems to excite the native ire as much as dancing, wine-bibbing, and eating the flesh of pigs. Even the highest person in the state is not exempt from the lampoons of these purveyors of scandal, as the following extract will attest: "The European king and his viziers, having heard that the Governor-general is a fool, exceedingly slack in managing affairs, he is to be recalled, and a clever lord sent out to save Bengal."

Native opinion is held in great scorn, and set at defiance by the European residents of India, who, with the solitary exception of a few, refusing to eat pork, out of deference to the prevailing prejudice, indulge themselves in every thing that appears to be most hateful to the surrounding multitude. But the excesses of which they are guilty would be excused or overlooked, were they more anxious to make themselves popular by affability and kindness of demeanour. In India, public admiration is not an evanescent feeling, or liable to the mutations which attend it in Europe. The people of Hindostan have no caprice in their affections, nor do they forget the benefits they have received. Instances have been known at Delhi of natives flocking to condole with a Resident on his

disgrace by the British Government, notwithstanding their hopes and expectations from his favour were at an end. And yet many persons, who have never for a single instant endeavoured to conciliate the people over whom they have been placed in authority, with power to render them happy, by accepting their services or courtesies with corresponding kindness, are loud in their invectives against native insincerity and ingratitude. It is precisely those, whose pride and insolence have rendered them objects of dislike, who thus animadvert upon the character of the people of Hindostan.

Delhi is considered to be one of the hottest places in India, owing probably to the arid nature of the country all around it, the immense quantity of buildings, which become so many reflectors, and the exceeding fury of the fiery *simoom*, which blows until ten o'clock at night, and sometimes does not subside during the twenty-four hours. This kind of weather lasts four months, and European residents must content themselves with in-door amusements for the whole period of its duration.

The rains and the cold season are both very agreeable; but there is one plague from which the city and its environs never are exempt,—that of

flies,—which come in armies similar to those which invaded Egypt in the time of Pharoah. In addition to the usual number of *chicks*, the blinds with which the doors and windows of English houses are furnished, the outer verandahs are carefully closed in with this pretty and useful manufacture of split bamboo, to secure the interiors from the hosts of winged enemies which would otherwise pervade the whole atmosphere. Persons living in tents, in the cold weather, are almost driven mad by the torments inflicted by these disgusting assailants. The natives wrap themselves up in a cloth, and lie down, preferring the chances of suffocation, as the lesser evil of the two; but the European must either submit to the constant attendance of a domestic, with a *chowrie*, to beat them off, or arm himself with patience to endure.

These, however, and other inflictions of the climate, are amply compensated by the endless gratification afforded to intellectual minds by the number of interesting objects which greet the spectator on every side. A life might be spent in rambling over the ruins of old Delhi, and subjects for contemplation still remain. Next to the palace, the most striking building of Shahjehanabad is the *Jumma Musjid*, a magnificent mosque, erected on

the summit of a rock of considerable height, ascended by three fine flights of steps. Three handsome gateways lead into a quadrangle of the noblest dimensions, paved with granite, inlaid with marble, and surrounded on three sides by an open cloister. Along this splendid area, which has a marble tank or reservoir of water in the centre, the visitor is conducted to another flight of steps, the ascent to the mosque, a superb hall, flanked with minarets, and entered by three lofty gothic arches crowned with marble domes. From the interstices of the piazza of this fine square, very picturesque views are obtained ; it has not the delicacy of finish of the pearl mosque at Agra, but its proportions are much finer, and its situation, upon so commanding an eminence, gives it a great advantage over other celebrated Moghul temples. The Jumma Musjid was the work of Aurungzebe, who, like many other usurpers, endeavoured to gain a reputation for piety ; and the better to impose upon a credulous multitude, who might have attributed his desire to gain the throne, by the imprisonment of his father and the murder of his brothers, to ambitious motives, clothed himself in the rags of a *faqeer*, and in this humble guise sought the shrine of the Jumma Musjid, to pray for the success of his rebellious

army. This mosque is kept in good repair by a grant of the English Government; it is much frequented by the faithful, of whom many hundreds may be seen at a time, prostrate on the pavement. It is also the resort of numerous beggars, and the poorer classes of travellers, who find all the shelter which the climate renders necessary in the nooks and recesses of the building.

There are other mosques which, from their antiquity or the historical circumstances connected with them, excite a good deal of curiosity; and the new suburb, called, after its projector, *Trevelyanpore*, under the village of Paharee, built to supply habitations for the increasing population of the city, is sufficiently interesting to attract a visit from strangers. The plan has been much approved for its elegant simplicity, though of course there are divers opinions concerning it. The centre, a large quadrangle, called Bentinck Square, is entered by four streets, opening from the middle of each side, and not at the angles, according to the usual European custom. The whole extent of the streets, which are ninety feet in width, and the *façade* of the square, present an unbroken front of Doric columns, supporting a piazza behind, in which are commodious shops and dwelling-houses, ranged with

great regularity. The four triangular spaces at the back, formed by the arms of the cross, are intended for stable and court-yards for the cattle and bullock-carts belonging to the inhabitants. In the event of Trevelyanpore becoming a place of native resort, a plan for increasing its extent has been laid down, and a native gentleman of great wealth is constructing a magnificent gateway, of corresponding architecture, fronting the Lahore gate of Delhi, which will lead to a circus, the centre of which is to be adorned with a cenotaph to the memory of a young British officer, a friend of Mr. Trevelyan, the founder of this new quarter, which has not yet, however, been much sought after as a residence by the native population.

The grand object of attraction, in the neighbourhood of Shahjehanabad, is the *Kootub Minar*, a magnificent tower, two hundred and forty-two feet in height, which rises in the midst of the ruins of old Delhi, at the distance of nine miles south of the modern city. It is not known by whom or for what purpose this splendid monument was erected; and conjecture, weary of a hopeless task, is now content to permit its origin to remain in obscurity. According to the general supposition, it was erected in the thirteenth century; but this is not certain, nor can

an object from every terrace in the neighbourhood, constitutes another of the lions of old Delhi; the lapse of seven hundred years has done little towards the reduction of the solid walls and massive towers of this fine old place, which is now chiefly celebrated for its tank or *bowlee*, embosomed within high picturesque buildings, which rise from twenty to sixty feet above the surface of the water,—a place of delightful coolness in the hot season, the sun not shining upon it for more than three hours a-day. It is deep as well as dark, and in the cold weather immersion cannot be very agreeable; yet the idle parties of young men who frequent the spot, take perhaps greater delight in the exploits of a few poor creatures, who pick up a precarious subsistence by plunging into the flashing waters, than in more legitimate objects of interest. Some of these will venture, for the sake of a rupee, from a very perilous height, springing from the dome of a neighbouring mosque down to the abyss below, sixty or seventy feet, and disappearing frightfully, the waters resuming their tranquillity before these desperate adventurers can rise again to the surface. Of course, amongst Europeans, there will always be persons sufficiently inhuman to encourage these barbarous feats; the few intellectual pilgrims, who

wander amidst the wrecks of bygone splendour, must make up their minds to endure sights and scenes of the most incongruous nature:—pic-nic parties bivouacking in the tombs, and being entertained at their repasts by the performances of a set of *nautch* girls; young men amusing themselves with a game of quoits; and groups of flirting unimaginative women, speculating on the probabilities of getting up a quadrille.

CHAPTER VII.

HURDWAR AND JUGGURNAUT.

THESE celebrated places of Hindoo pilgrimage are, at peculiar periods of the year, highly attractive to European visitors, more particularly Hurdwar, which lies almost in the route of those who are travelling to or from the Himalaya; and which possesses, in addition to its other claims to notice, picturesque beauties which can scarcely be surpassed. It is at this hallowed spot that the sacred river, emerging from its mountain birthplace, enters upon the wide plains of Hindostan, a clear, beautiful, but rather shallow stream, and, though somewhat rapid, affording, at the period of the annual fair, no indications of the fury and velocity with which, during the rains, it pursues its headlong course until it meets the sea.

The town of Hurdwar, which is distinguished by a handsome range of buildings, backing an esplanade which runs along the bank of the river, occupies ground only partially cleared from the

neighbouring forest. The deep and dense woods of the terrae sweep down to the western suburb, uniting their verdant avenues to the arched gateways and pillared colonnades of the streets. The pass, or gorge, leading to the valley of the Dhoon, presents landscapes of almost incomparable beauty, while the splendid piles of mountains, rising in the back-ground, give a wild sublimity to the scene, which can scarcely fail to inspire with enthusiastic delight every breast not entirely indifferent to nature's wonders. We know not whether the fine bursts of scenery, which greet the eye at every point, have any part in the attachment manifested by the pilgrims to Hurdwar; the natives in general, and more particularly the lower classes, are singularly deficient in their perceptions of inanimate beauty; indeed, it is doubtful whether they are much attracted by loveliness in any form, or whether they do not, either in their wisdom, or their want of relish for the poetry of life, always prefer the *utilis* to the *dulcis*. A tree to them is chiefly, if not entirely, valuable for its shade; a stream is associated solely with the pleasure of quenching the thirst, and cooling the parched brow; and if a wife be docile, and fully equal to her household duties, it matters little what her

claims to beauty may be. Yet, though more than ordinarily free from poetical influences, some portion of the rapturous delight with which the Hindoo devotees hail the first sight of the Ganges, as it issues forth from the Alpine solitudes beyond Hurdwar, must be attributed to the enchantment produced upon the eye by the loveliness of the combinations of hill, and wood, and gushing river. Shouts of "*Mahadeo Bol!*" of "*Bol! Bol!*" and "*Ram! Ram!*" rend the skies, as the worshippers of the sacred waters approach the place of their pilgrimage. The road is covered for miles with travelling parties; rich, poor, of both sexes and all ages, crowd to this oriental carnival, and there is scarcely any part of Asia which does not send forth a deputation; the commercial speculations and traffic, incidental to the fair, being quite as attractive to the worldly-minded, as purification to the devotee.

In former times, the meeting of so vast a multitude was productive of many hostile collisions. The rage of different sects was excited against each other, and quarrels were followed up by blows and bloodshed. The accounts given by the few European spectators who, before the occupation of the country by the British Government, chanced to

visit the strange and wondrous scene, were absolutely terrific. At that time, holy mendicants, and men who could command bands of armed retainers, tyrannized over less fortunate persons; while professional robbers openly pursued their calling, plundering with impunity those who were unable to defend themselves. Affairs now wear a much more peaceable aspect, and the order and tranquillity which prevails reflects the greatest credit upon the civil and military authorities, upon whom the task of maintaining harmony amidst such jarring materials devolves.

All weapons brought by the visitors are delivered up to the care of *chuprassies* appointed by the judge or magistrate to receive them; a ticket is given to the owner, which, upon presenting on his return home, enables him to receive his property again. An island in the centre of the river is garrisoned for the period of the fair by several hundred men, belonging to the Sirmoor battalion of hill rangers, whose usual quarters are at Deyrah Doon. These men are employed to keep the peace, and they have hitherto succeeded most wonderfully.

The town of Hurdwar does not afford accommodation for a tenth part of the numbers who

crowd to its ghauts; but Asiatics are independent of lodging-rooms; the rich carry their canvas dwellings along with them, and the poor are contented with the shelter of a tree. The country round about is formed into one vast camp, in which Arabs, Cingalese, Persians, Tartars, mingle with Seiks, people from Cutch, Guzerat, Nepaul, and all other provinces of India; while, a little removed from the din and clamour of this Babel-like assemblage, are to be seen the tents of European visitants, ladies, who venture fearlessly into the hubbub, sitting as much at their ease as the dust, the myriads of flies, and the intolerable clamour, will admit.

To give some idea of the valuable nature of the articles brought to Hurdwar for sale, it may be interesting to state, that a necklace consisting of a row of alternate diamonds and emeralds was valued at five thousand pounds; for another composed of splendid pearls, a fifth part of that sum was demanded; and those of wrought gold were from thirty to fifty pounds each. All sorts of brazen vessels are exposed for sale, and a great variety of idols of the same metal, which, previous to being consecrated, may be purchased by the pound. After the Brahmins have shed the odour of sanctity upon

them they increase prodigiously in price; persons, therefore, who only buy out of curiosity, should content themselves with the least valuable article. Inferior trinkets, in the shape of beads, necklaces, bangles, armlets, and anklets of silver or of baser metal abound, together with real and mock coral, tinsel, and glass. There are mouth-pieces for pipes, of lapis lazuli, agate, cornelian, and different kinds of marbles, and toys in ivory, stone, and mother-o'-pearl. Rosaries and Brahminical cords in great abundance, with preserved skins of wild animals, and stuffed birds. Truffles are brought from the countries north of the Sutledge. The sherbets are the finest in the world, but the manufacture and the consumption of sweetmeats almost exceed belief. Every fourth shop at Hurdwar is a confectioner's, and the process of making and baking goes on at all hours of the day and night.

The fairs of India differ in many particulars from those of Europe; though jugglers and tumblers are to be found, together with snake-charmers, and others who procure their subsistence by the exhibition of sleight-of-hand or tricks of cunning, there are, properly speaking, none of the shews which attract so much attention at home. The

articles intended for sale are arranged with more regard to convenience than taste, either strewed promiscuously upon the ground, or hidden in the tents; the various wild animals, which form a part of the merchant's speculations, are openly exposed to public view, and, though gazed at with wonder and amazement by strangers from distant lands, are not rendered more profitable by being exhibited for money. The passion for sight-seeing may be equally strong in India as in England, but it is chiefly confined to the pageants displayed at festivals, and as yet curiosity has not been much excited by the wonders of nature. The cattle-department, at the fair of Hurdwar, is the most attractive, both to Europeans and natives, being considered the best in India; horses are brought from Kattiawar, Cutch, the countries north of the Sutledge river, Persia, and the shores of the Red Sea, perfect in blood and bone, proud in their bearing, swift as the wind, and suited to warriors and cavaliers: these fine animals are contrasted with a race less showy, but equally useful, the small compact and sturdy breeds of Cashmere and Cabul, and the mountain ghoonts, of which M. Jacquemont has lately made such honourable mention. Elephants also rear their gigantic forms in the encamp-

ing-grounds of the dealers. Like the horse, they are distinguished by their good points: the tusks should be perfect, and they are greatly esteemed when the tail is of the orthodox dimensions, and furnished with a flat tuft of hair at its extremity.

The difference of appearance between an elephant destined for the pad, or as the caparisoned bearer of princes and nobles, is very great, but will bear no comparison with that which is displayed in the camel. At Hurdwar, every description of this animal may be seen, from the uncomfortable-looking, dejected beast of burthen, to the thorough-bred *hircarrah*, which can maintain its speed during a hundred miles without pause or rest: a winged messenger, which none but the best trained and hardiest of riders can venture to mount. For a very long period, the camel and the dromedary were supposed to be distinct animals, but modern naturalists have decided that there is in reality no difference between them, the single and double-humped being merely a variety, and the fleetness and intelligence of both depending upon early education. Buffalos, cows, and sheep, are likewise exhibited for sale, the list of domestic animals closing with dogs and cats, the beautiful races of Persia, so much sought after in India, making their ap-

pearance by the side of some huge elephant. Monkeys, which may be said to occupy a sort of debateable ground between the wild beasts of the field and the quadrupeds which man has enlisted into his service, are brought in great numbers to Hurdwar; bears, leopards, and cheetas are likewise numerous, and deer of every kind, from the stately nylghau, to that diminutive species which can be so rarely preserved in a state of captivity, even in India, are purchaseable: the yak is also sometimes to be found at Hurdwar, though the advance of the season renders their appearance rare, since they are unable to bear the heat of the plains. The most valuable articles of commerce procurable at this fair, are the gems and precious stones of all descriptions which lapidaries bring from every part of Asia; the shawls and cloths from Cashmere and Thibet rank next; the same dealer may also have a stock of English woollens upon hand; and perfumery and *bijouterie* of every kind from London and Paris find their way to this remote market.

In former remarks upon the subject of the extraordinary low prices at which European goods are sold by native dealers, and the consequent losses sustained by speculations made at a venture, I have mentioned the heterogenous mixture of

articles in the possession of Indian venders, and their extreme ignorance of the intrinsic value of each. Many of the investments sent out to India, are utterly useless to the great bulk of the population; and so little have the climate, habits, and wants of the people been studied by European traders, that cargoes of Irish butter have been despatched to Calcutta, and, as a matter of course, nothing but the casks remained at the end of the voyage, the contents having exuded at every crack. It was at one time thought by the worthies of Glasgow, that the natives of India would gladly exchange their muslin turbans for a covering of felt; and accordingly a ship was freighted with round hats, articles only prized by the *topes wallahs* (hat fellows), the term commonly used to designate Europeans.

I do not know whether the information upon this important subject, communicated in the Madras and Calcutta papers, has travelled to England, but in speaking of the commodities which are to be met with at Hurdwar, it will not be out of place to mention those which would be most likely to find purchasers at fair prices. In the cutlery department, there should be scissors, pen-knives, and razors; next, common padlocks and

cheap locks of every description. Red and blue broad-cloth, and serge, with woollen caps, such as sailors wear, sell well. In cotton and silk, care should be taken to select articles which would make up readily into turbans and *sarees*; the former should be white, scarlet, or crimson, plain or flowered, twenty yards long by twelve inches; cloths for the duputtee six yards long and one and a-half broad, plain, or white, or those with coloured borders, which are much in request; also chintzes of gaudy patterns, which, as the fashions in India are unchangeable, would secure a constant sale. Stationery is in considerable demand, but it should consist of very cheap paper, both foolscap and post, French and Italian, it is said, answering best, in consequence of the low price at which they are manufactured; quills, red wafers, and black-lead pencils, complete the list in this department. The catalogue of English books is rather amusing; in addition to school dictionaries, (that of Mylius, and that by Fulton and Knight, being recommended); Murray's grammar, spelling-book and English reader: the list contains an abridgment of the *Spectator*, *Arabian Nights*, *Chesterfield's Letters*, and whole or abridged; English Dialogues, the *Young Man's Best Companion*, and the *Uni-*

versal Letter Writer. These are eagerly sought after, but as yet, as far as regards the generality of Indian students, the remaining portion of English literature has been written in vain, and will not find native purchasers beyond the presidencies.

Watches of silver or yellow metal, costing from thirty shillings to five pounds, are greatly in demand: also good spectacles, in cheap mountings of silver or metal, plated ware not finding a ready sale in India; small mirrors in plain frames, and lanthorns of a common sort, fitted up with lamps for oil. Patterns of hard-ware manufactory should be procured from India, for the natives will not eat or drink out of new-fangled utensils, however convenient they may be: plates, dishes, basins, and bowls, of iron, copper, and tin, should be fashioned after a peculiar manner, as also the *lota*, or jug, from which if an unpractised European were to attempt to drink, he would inevitably spill every drop of the liquor. In medicine, there is an incessant demand for the following articles: bark-powder and quinine, jalap and cream of tartar, essence of peppermint, brandy disguised as a medicine, eau de Cologne, lavender-water, and strong sweet water, such as eau de mille fleurs. This list will appear very scanty, but the gentle-

man who furnished it assures us that it will not be expedient to add any thing to it for the purpose of supplying the wants of the interior : he caused it to be examined and corrected by several opulent and respectable natives, who were well acquainted with the actual state of the country, and with what would be most likely to sell amidst the great mass of the people ; many of the most respectable classes being poor, and content with the commonest conveniences of life.

The anxiety to promote the interests of commerce, will excuse the insertion of the concluding paragraph of this interesting article upon the subject of India trade :* “ One point, however, must not be forgotten ; most invoices are sold at Madras, where the prices maintained are very moderate. They seldom reach the interior, where a better price would be easily found, and when carried up the country by hawkers and petty dealers, the price becomes exorbitant. To obviate these inconveniences, the exporter should provide cases containing small miscellaneous invoices, *made up in England*, and these should be landed at various parts of the coast, so as to be conveyed straight

* First published at Madras and copied into the Calcutta newspapers.

to the best markets ; as, for instance, Tanjore, Madura, Trichinopoly, Nagpore, Seringapatam, or Hyderabad. At these places and many more (the names of which will be gradually ascertained by the merchant), a ready-money price will be immediately obtained ; the cost of inland carriage will not average more than two per cent. on the prime cost, while the profits will be from one hundred to three hundred per cent."

The English visitors at Hurdwar are made to smile at the base uses to which the refinements of European luxury are degraded ; nothing appears to be employed for the precise purpose for which it was originally intended ; table-covers of woollen with printed borders, black and crimson, or yellow and blue, figure upon the shoulders of the poorer classes, who have purchased them for next to nothing, tables being at present unknown in the houses of the natives, while prints are offered for sale upside down, and hung up in the same manner when purchased. A taste for the fine arts is still a desideratum in India, and from personal experience of the difficulty of explaining the most obvious pictorial subject to an uneducated native, the probability of conveying instruction through the medium of paintings seems very questionable.

There is of course nothing like neatness or order in the arrangement of the stalls of the merchants at Hurdwar. Each strives to make the merits of his commodities known by clamorous commendations. It is necessary to be a good judge of every article to avoid being taken in, and to be tolerably expert at driving a bargain : the venders demanding exorbitant sums, which they lower gradually when convinced that they have no chance of succeeding in obtaining more than a tenth part. The art of selling a horse is well understood in India, and persons ought to be well acquainted with the secrets of the trade to deal with such experienced jockeys. The dexterity with which they shew off the animal's accomplishments, and the extraordinary degree of training and doctoring which they undergo, deceive the inexperienced and the presumptuous youths, who fancy that they may credit the evidence of their senses. An incorrigibly vicious beast, which nothing but a native of the Pampas could ride, is drugged with opium until he appears to be of lamb-like gentleness ; while stimulants are administered to the weak and sluggish, which give them a temporary shew of vigour and activity. Some of the finest Arabs bear very high prices ; the principal merchant, during the

writer's residence in India, asked £800 for a beautiful milk-white charger, and could not be induced to take a smaller sum : the price of a good camel is £8, but the sums given for elephants vary as much as those at which horses are sold.

The waters of the Ganges are supposed to derive additional sanctity at the expiration of every twelfth year, and the concourse of pilgrims is much greater upon these anniversaries. The astronomers in attendance calculate the precise moment in which ablution is supposed to be particularly beneficial, and, at the sounding of the Brahminical shell, the anxious crowds precipitate themselves into the water. In consequence of the narrowness of the principal ghaut, this simultaneous rush was formerly attended with great danger, and frequently with loss of life. A dreadful concussion, in which numbers perished, determined the British Government to remedy the evil; a more commodious passage to the river was constructed, and the returning pilgrims, when they saw the preparations made to secure their safety, mingled shouts and blessings upon their human benefactors, with their acclamations to Mahadeva. The liveliness with which the Hindoos express their gratitude, and their quick sensibility to kindness

and attention to their convenience and comfort, seem incompatible with the apathetic temperament manifested upon many occasions. The prejudices of caste, and the influence of predestinarianism, which render them indifferent to suffering, are the causes of this inconsistency, and, so great is their effect, that it is difficult to imagine that one and the same person could display such contrary feelings,—so much coldness, and torpor at one period, and so much emotion and vivacity at another. At Hurdwar, all the enthusiastic elements of the native character are called into action ; the pilgrims and merchants are lively and energetic beyond the sober conceptions of the English spectators, who look on half-stupified by the clamour, and all astonishment at the power of the human lungs exhibited in a manner almost exceeding belief. The noises incidental to a crowded Indian assemblage have been too often described to need repetition ; but they are so supereminently astounding at Hurdwar, that no account of the ordinary din and dissonance can afford the faintest notion of the uproar which prevails. The ringing of bells, the firing of cannon, and the loud huzzas of European multitudes, however deafening, are nothing to the wild and continuous discord which assails the ear at this

meeting. The bawling and drumming of the *fakirs* never appear to cease during a single instant; then, in addition to the most horrid blasts the direst trumpet ever blew, we have the Brahminical shell, the *nobut*, the *dhole*, and the *gong*. The animals, terrified by the confusion around them, neigh, bellow, grunt, and roar, with more than usual vehemence, and this tumult continues, night and day, without the slightest interval of peace. The instant that the voice of a *jogee* or other devotee fails, he applies himself to his bell, ringing with astounding clamour until the lungs can come into play again.

The only ceremonial used by the bathers is that of ablution, which consists merely in dipping in the Ganges, and in paying the tribute, collected carefully by the attendant Brahmins. Those who are desirous of securing a large share of the good things of this and of the next world, are proportionably liberal to the religious mendicants, who form the most conspicuous figures in the scene. The more dreadfully degraded from the dignity of men, the more filthy, squalid, and indecent in their appearance, the higher is the veneration with which these *fakirs* are regarded. Though sufficiently numerous in other places, they repair in troops to

Hurdwar, occupying the verandahs, galleries, and roofs of the principal buildings, and stages of bamboo erected for their accommodation in the centre of the stream, superintending the devotions of the bathers, which are however, generally speaking, confined to manifestations of joy at having obtained the end and object of a long and toilsome pilgrimage. The latest accounts from India state that the fair at Hurdwar is upon the decline, and that many of the Brahmins, who were formerly attached to its temples, have taken service under Europeans. By some, this falling off in religious enthusiasm is attributed to the conviction (mainly produced by the subjection of Bhurtpore), that it is impossible to withstand the power of the Christians, who will sooner or later induce all India to conform to their creed, and this idea has doubtless considerable weight with a superstitious people. But, however, in remarking upon the lukewarmness observable, all over Hindostan, towards festivals formerly exciting the highest degree of reverential regard, the labours of the missionaries must not be wholly overlooked and forgotten.

Since the period in which the English first obtained a footing in India, the efforts of these zealous disciples have been unremitting; they are always

to be found in large and promiscuous assemblies, standing at the ghauts, or sitting in the porches of the temples, distributing tracts to the passers-by, and expounding the Scriptures to such as will listen to them. Not discouraged by their apparent want of success, they have continued to exercise the duties of their calling with untiring activity, and we should do great injustice to the intellectual powers of many of the classes of the natives, if we did not suppose that the perusal of such portions of the Holy Writings as have been placed for the purpose in their hands, has not had the effect of disturbing their belief in the monstrous fallacies of the Hindoo religion. Captain Skinner assures us that the Sikhs, in particular, evinced the greatest anxiety to possess themselves of the tracts offered to them by a missionary at the fair of Hurdwar. "I stood," observes the above-mentioned authority, "near the spot where he was sitting, without, I believe, being perceived by him, and was astonished at the attention which they all paid to the few words which he was able to address to them. A middle-aged man, with several of his family about him, came up to me with his book, and repeated the words the '*Padre Sahib*' had spoken to him on presenting it, and, as if really anxious to have

them corroborated, asked with much earnestness if it were true—‘*Sach bat?*’ I assured him it all was;—‘Then,’ said he, ‘I will read the book to my family when I get home.’”

The new *ghaut* is exceedingly wide and handsome, not less than a hundred feet in breadth, and descending by a fine flight of about sixty steps into the water; it is covered at every hour of the day with multitudes of bathers, ascending and descending, and uttering *Wah! wah!* as they contrast the present facilities with the former difficulties of the approach.

The annual fair at Hurdwar affords abundant opportunities for the exercise of dacoity; it is here that the highest dexterity in the art of thieving is displayed. It is said that, like the vampire-bat, which lulls its victim to sleep by gently fanning him with its wings while it sucks the vital current from his veins, these accomplished marauders employ some soothing art which deepens the repose of the slumberer, while they possess themselves of every article belonging to him, even to the very sheet on which he may be lying; stripped to the skin, and their bodies rubbed with oil, no snake can be more smooth and supple, or more quiet in its movements. They will glide into a tent, in

spite of the utmost watchfulness of the sentinel appointed to guard it ; and so impossible is it to prevent the entrance of such intruders, that the only method to preserve the property is to keep it all upon the outside, under the charge of the sentry, who must neither slumber upon his post nor stir for a single instant from the spot.

At all periods of the year, the *ghauts* at Hurdwar are frequented by pilgrims ; but they are few in number compared to the tide which rushes down the mountain gorge and along the lower plains at the anniversary of the fair.

This concourse is often very considerably increased by the visits of persons having little save curiosity for their object. At one anniversary the Begum Sumroo was present with the attendance of a thousand horse, and fifteen hundred infantry. Mahomedan princes frequently come in great force, and the European spectators sometimes amount to three hundred. Upon such occasions the encampments of the visitors are usually fixed at some distance in the neighbourhood, the town and immediate environs of Hurdwar affording scanty accommodation for the pilgrims. Kunkul, where there is a large open plain, which is situated at only two miles distance, is more convenient, and the

greater proportion of Europeans pitch their tents at that place. Hindoo ladies of high rank, when desiring to bathe in the Ganges at Hurdwar, are conveyed into the river in large covered litters, which completely conceal them from the gaze of the multitude. The advantages obtained by the pilgrims are supposed to be in proportion to the number of immersions; but as every plunge into the water must be accompanied by a donation to the priests in attendance, it is only the rich who can obtain any material benefit from these ablutions.

Very different from Hurdwar is the aspect of Juggurnaut. This celebrated temple is erected upon the sea coast of Orissa, in the district of Cuttack, the first Indian land which the passengers of a ship sailing direct from England to Calcutta espy. The dark and frowning pagoda, rising abruptly from a ridge of sand, forms a conspicuous object from the sea, its huge and shapeless mass not unlike some ill-proportioned giant, affording a gloomy type of the hideous superstitions of the land. While gazing on this mighty Moloch, the mind is impressed with a strange awe, the bright and golden sunshine above, and the waving foliage below, only serve to deepen its horrors; it

looks like a foul blot upon the fair face of nature, a frightful monument of man's success in marring the designs of his creator. At Hurdwar, it is not only very possible to sympathize in the feelings of the multitudes, whose adoration is called forth by the bright river, one of the greatest blessings which the Almighty has bestowed upon the burning soil, but to go even farther, and lift up our thoughts, amidst the most beautiful scenes of nature, unto nature's God. At Juggurnaut, there is nothing save unalloyed horror. Frightful idols enclosed in an equally frightful shrine, and seen when viewed from the land to be surrounded by a waste of sand hills, revolt the mind, and give to superstition its most disgusting aspect; and the disagreeable impression, which a distant prospect excites, is increased upon a nearer approach to a scene associated with all that is most fearful and disgusting in religious error. Every known rule of architecture being set at defiance, it would be difficult, without the aid of the pencil, to convey any idea of the half-tower, half-pyramidal style of the great pagoda; it is built of a coarse red granite brought from the southern parts of Cuttack, and covered with a rough coating of *chunam*. The tower containing the idols, which is 200 feet high, and serves as a land-mark to the

mariner, stands in the centre of a quadrangle, enclosed by a high stone wall, extending 650 feet on each side, and surrounded by minor edifices of nondescript shapes.

The magnitude of these buildings forms their sole claim to admiration; they are profusely decorated with sculpture, but so rudely carved as to afford no pleasure to the eye, the only object worthy of praise being a pillar of black stone, beautifully proportioned and finely designed, which has been brought from the black pagoda in the neighbourhood, and placed in front of the principal entrance. The outer gateway and the great portal of the temple are ascended by broad flights of steps, and the interior is described as being very curious and well worthy of inspection, a sight which, however, is very rarely enjoyed by Europeans. The Brahmins in attendance take care to exclude all profane footsteps; but it is said, upon the authority of Major Archer, that a young officer of a native corps, a peculiar favourite with the sepoys under his command, was at one time smuggled into the sanctuary by the connivance of the soldiers, who dyed his skin of the proper hue, dressed him in full costume, and painting the peculiar marks of their caste upon his forehead and nose, crowded round

him upon all sides, and, thus secured from detection, brought him into the very presence of the idol. A distant view, notwithstanding the zeal of his conductors, was all that he obtained; and either there not being a great deal to attract his attention, or a sense of danger preventing him from feeling sufficiently at his ease to make many observations, the information acquired from his account was very scanty; he told his friends that he saw nothing but large courts and apartments for the priests.

The festival of the *Rath Jatra* takes place every year; but, as at Hurdwar, it increases in sanctity at peculiar periods, every third, sixth, and twelfth anniversary, the latter more particularly, being considered of greater importance than those that intervene. The concourse of pilgrims is still exceedingly large, and numbers, as in former times, never return, leaving their bodies to fester on the neighbouring sands, victims to a horrible superstition, though not, as heretofore, sacrificed under the suicidal wheels of the cruel idol's car. Such immolations are becoming very unfrequent; but fatigue, hardship, want of food, and the various diseases brought on by exposure to the pestilential atmosphere of the rains, make fearful havoc among the miserable wretches who hasten onwards to the holy

precincts of the temple, in the hope of obtaining a panacea for all their woes.

A favourite method of approach to Juggurnaut, by those who have either great offences to expiate, or who are desirous of obtaining a more than ordinary portion of beatitude, is to measure the length the whole way from some extraordinary distance. The pilgrim lies down, marks the spot which the extremity of his hands have touched, and rising rests his feet upon the spot, and, again prostrating himself, repeats the same process. Five years are sometimes consumed in this manner, and, as the penance may be performed by proxy, it is often volunteered for a certain sum of money, the wages being most scrupulously earned by the person who undertakes the duty. In no part of the world is gold so all-powerful as in India; upon the morning of an intended execution, a stranger appeared in the place of the criminal, and declaring that he had for a certain consideration agreed to suffer for the person who had made the bargain, seemed quite astonished to find any hesitation on the part of the authorities to execute the sentence, remonstrating with them upon the folly of their scruples, since he was ready and willing to perform his part. Fortunately for him, he had not to deal with his

own countrymen, who, provided that somebody died, would have cared very little whether it was the offender or his substitute.*

The great temple of Juggurnaut was erected in the twelfth century, under the auspices of the chief minister of the rajah of the district. The idols have nothing to distinguish them save their size and their deformity; the principal one, Krishna, is intended as a mystic representation of the supreme power,—for the Hindoos are unanimous in declaring that they worship only one god, and that the images, which they exhibit and to which they pay the most reverential homage, are merely attributes of a deity pervading the whole of nature;—he is associated with the two other personages of the Hindoo triad, and every one of the idols particularly venerated by the numerous tribes and sects of Hindostan, obtains a shrine within the precincts of this huge temple, so that all castes may unite in celebrating the great festival with one accord. The installation of the great idol upon his car, or *rath*, and the procession attendant upon his triumphal march to a country residence about a mile and a-half distant, a journey which occupies three days, are performed with many

* Such substitutions are not uncommon in China.

ceremonies, though not all of a very respectful nature. Previous to this grand ovation, the images are taken from their altars to be bathed, and are then exhibited to public view upon an elevated terrace.

These gigantic busts, hideously ugly, and scarcely bearing the rudest lineaments of the human form, are seen mounted upon pedestals, the latter being concealed by muffling draperies. The hands, feet, and ears of the great idol are of gold, but these are kept in a box by themselves, and are only fastened into their sockets after Juggurnaut has been safely deposited upon his car. While seated in state upon the terrace, a canopy, gay with cloths of various colours, is raised over the heads of the triad, and crowds of Brahmins are in attendance with *punkahs* and *chowries*, to beat off the flies. Occasionally, the sudden flash of a vivid fire-work sheds a momentary ray upon the horrid countenances of these Dagons, and in the next instant all is again involved in the indistinct gloom of an eastern twilight, dimly revealing the huge forms of the idols, and the eager gesticulations of their misguided votaries. The unwieldliness of Juggurnaut and his companions, and the absence of the machinery necessary to effect their removal in a pro-

per and decorous manner, occasions a scene which scandalizes European eyes, but which the natives, accustomed to the doctrine of expediency, survey without feeling that they are offering any indignity to the objects of their worship. The only method of transport which has been yet devised, is by means of ropes fastened round the necks and feet of these cumbrous images, which are thus dragged from their high places down the steps, and through the gateways of the temple, and are afterwards hauled up in the same manner upon the *raths*, without regard to mud or dust.

The car of Juggurnaut is a monstrous vehicle, gigantic in its dimensions, and associated in the mind with images of horror; it is a sort of platform, forty-three feet in height and thirty-five feet square, moving upon sixteen wheels, each six feet and a half in diameter: the ornaments with which it is decorated are by no means splendid, its principal attraction being a covering of striped and spangled broad cloth. The villagers of the neighbouring *pergunnahs*, have their fields rent-free upon the condition of attendance at the cars of the idols. This duty, at present esteemed a privilege, is not exclusively confined to those who are so well rewarded for its performance, but, before the whole

ceremony concludes, the zeal of many of the devotees is so completely exhausted, that the *raths* would scarcely reach their destination were it not for the services which the Brahmins can command. It takes fifteen hundred men to put each of the cars of Juggurnaut in motion, and, when the idols are fairly established in their places, the shouts and cries of the frenzied multitude are such as to lead us to fancy that the whole of Pandemonium had been let loose, an idea which is strengthened by the fiend-like figures of the Jogies, Gosseins, and other religious mendicants, whose grim visages, lighted up with a frantic joy, give them a super-human appearance, as they cheer on their insane followers to acts of horror. Though the ponderous wheels of Juggurnaut no longer go crushing over the bodies of prostrate victims, the fury and excitement, with which the assembled crowd rush to the car, is absolutely appalling. In places of very inferior note, there is something frightful in the noisy lumbering progress of the cumbrous *rath*, surmounted by a hideous idol, dragged about in honour of the festival; but in the very heart and centre of this abominable superstition, the celebration becomes perfectly terrific, and the senses, over-wrought, faint and sicken at the view. The scenery of the

place, its bare sands, the surging of the ocean in the distance, the drenching rains, damp gales, and sudden tempests of the fitful atmosphere, add to the wild horrors of this awful pageant. Each day the exhibition becomes more ghastly, as the wan victims of famine and disease drop exhausted around, making a golgotha of the unhallowed precincts.

The most sacred portion of the soil round the temple of Juggurnaut extends to a circle of about eight miles, though the land is considered holy to a much greater distance; and the whole, during sickly seasons, may be said to be covered with the dead bodies of the pilgrims, who, unequal to encounter exposure to the inclemency of the weather, sink under accumulated hardships, to form a frightful banquet for carrion birds and beasts of prey. Most authorities agree that the tax, which was levied by the government upon the pilgrims to Juggurnaut, here as well as at Allahabad, tended to diminish the number of persons resorting to the festival, and also the amount of suicides. Still a good deal of scandal was excited by the support of an establishment, by Christian rulers, of a stud of elephants, horses, and other equipments for the service of the idol; and the annual waste of life, though not oc-

casioned by actual offerings to the blood-stained wheels of the demoniacal car, is nearly equally shocking, as the result of one of the most frightful delusions that ever spread its curse upon the human race.

The country about Juggurnaut consists of low sand-hills covered by a thick, but not tall, forest of trees, the gigantic vegetable products of the soil not being found so near the coast: about a mile from the sea, cultivation abruptly ceases, the intervening space being a waste of deep and loose sand, extending along the desolate shore.

The town of Pooree is situated upon the margin of this desert; but the European cantonments, with greater regard to comfort and convenience than picturesque beauty, occupy a high ridge, which is perfectly destitute of verdure, fronting the sea, and having the benefit of all its cooling breezes. Pooree is, in consequence, notwithstanding its desolate appearance and its isolated situation, a desirable quarter; *punkahs* are scarcely necessary at any period of the year; and, worn out by the oppressive heat of Bengal and Hindostan, many are delighted to loiter away the time on the health-inspiring, though solitary, shores of Cuttack. The beach is destitute of shells, or of any marine pro-

duction interesting to the naturalist; the neighbouring sea, however, abounds in fish; and oysters, crabs, and lobsters, which are never attainable at Calcutta in their freshest state, are taken with the greatest ease. They are not generally supposed to be equal in flavour to those found in England; but this idea is in all probability more occasioned by the want of appetite, and consequent relish, of the sojourners of a tropical clime than any real inferiority on the part of the fish. During the monsoon the surf rises with great vehemence, presenting breakers equally formidable with those of Madras, and effectually preventing any thing, save boats of native construction, from holding communication with ships in the offing.

It sometimes happens that officers, who have nearly out-stayed the period permitted for absence in England, prevail upon the captains who bring them out to land them at Pooree, whence they can report their return to head-quarters long before the ship can reach its destined port; and as at all times the European outward-bound appear within sight of the black pagoda, or the temple of Juggurnaut, and not unfrequently hold communication by signal with the harbour-master of Pooree, the inhabitants of the station look out with great anxiety for pas-

sing vessels, and derive their greatest enjoyment from the expectation of obtaining news from England before it can arrive at Calcutta.

The sand is ill-adapted either for walking or for riding, and in boisterous weather becomes so great a nuisance as more than to counterbalance the advantages of the sea-breeze. The houses are not built with the attention to comfort which characterizes those of the interior; they are more in the style of the primitive *bungalow*, pervious to every wind from heaven, and gritty in every quarter from the drifting sand. The interior parts of the district abound in game; but in the immediate neighbourhood of Pooree, the ardour of the most determined sportsman is soon quenched by the difficulties which surround him, and the worthlessness of the prizes which reward his toil. But while the mightiest hunter is obliged to remain inactive, a wide field is opened to the antiquary, who may spend the whole period of a protracted sojourn in examining and inquiring into the relics of Hindoo antiquities which are to be found in every part of the hallowed soil.

There are several pagodas, occupying a considerable tract of ground, scattered amongst the sand-hills which have heaped themselves along the

coast. Many of these are protected from the encroachments of the drift, by massy walls; but others, not having the same facilities for keeping the space clear around them, are almost swallowed up in the sand. All are exceedingly picturesque in their appearance; and their gaunt and withered inhabitants, only a little less infernal in their aspect than the deformed objects of their worship, sprawling on the floors, or grinning from a niche, combined with the dreariness of the land-scene, and the loud roar of the ever-sounding surf, altogether form a picture of wild sublimity, which leaves an indelible impression upon the mind.

The black pagoda, or temple of the sun, one of the most splendid Hindoo remains which India can boast, and which is an object of great attraction to all the intellectual visitants of Pooree, is situated about sixteen miles to the north of the native city, in the midst of a wilderness of sand, with which the jungle has struggled, not always unsuccessfully, for the ascendancy: here and there patches of verdure make their appearance, and the gentle risings of the ground relieve the dull monotony of the adjacent plains. It is of much earlier antiquity than Juggurnaut, but has lost its sanctity in the eyes of the multitude, and is now deserted and

left to ruin. The roof is pyramidal, rising from a square building of great solidity; but owing to a defect in the architecture, a large portion of this massive edifice is in ruins, and it is somewhat difficult to comprehend its original design.

Weeds, the gigantic product of a most prolific soil, prickly pear, and copse-wood, have spread themselves over and amidst the enormous masses of recumbent ruins, above which the surviving portion of the temple rears itself, and from the summit of an artificial mound, bids defiance to the encroaching sand, and lifts its head proudly as a beacon to the wanderers of the wave. Those who have closely examined the numberless sculptures which adorn this once splendid temple, report them to be of exquisite beauty; the choice of subject, however, in many must prevent them from being made better known by the aid of drawings; but this unhappy taste does not pervade the whole edifice; and some of the colossal remains, especially of elephants and griffins, are magnificent. Any attempt at minute description would occupy many pages, while it must utterly fail in conveying an adequate idea of the lonely majesty of this desecrated pile. A few *fakirs*, looking more like wood-demons than men, share the shelter afforded by the numerous eaver-

nous chambers, with the porcupines and bears composing the principal population of the place ; tigers occasionally join the assembly, though the latter intruders, arousing the spirit of adventure in the youth of the neighbouring station, are speedily put to the rout.

The intolerance of the Mussulmans, and their determination to overthrow idolatry in the seat of their conquests, obliged the Brahmins of Juggurnaut, upon more than one occasion, to resort to stratagem for the preservation of their sacred images. Twice have they been carried away and hidden amongst fastnesses beyond the Chilka lake (a neck of the sea, about seventeen miles to the south of Pooree), and there enshrined until better times enabled them to return : but even the servants of the Prophet, tired of the attempt to force their religion upon the still more bigotted followers of Brahma, came at length to a compromise, and turned the object of their antipathy into a source of profit, by instituting a tax, which was continued by the British Government. Formerly, the concourse of pilgrims was so great as to yield a revenue of nine lacs of rupees ; but the receipts have dwindled yearly, during a considerable period ; and the progress of civilization and of knowledge is

now extending so rapidly, that at no very great distance of time we may hope that the fearful orgies celebrated at Juggurnaut may be looked upon as bygone things, and that a purer creed will be established upon the ruins of that monstrous fabric of superstition, which has so long tyrannized over the mental faculties of the Indian world.

CHAPTER VIII.

GOUR, MANDOO, AND BEJAPORE.

INDIA abounds in deserted cities,—vast extensive ruins,—many of which may be described, in the words of the prophet Isaiah, as peopled only with desolate creatures. One of the most remarkable is Gour, the ancient capital of Bengal. The remains of this once-flourishing place are to be found in the district of Dinagepore, a few miles to the southward of Malda. Its decline and abandonment were caused by the desertion of the Ganges, which formerly flowed beside its walls. About two hundred years ago, the course of the river took a new direction, turning off to a considerable distance from the place to which it had brought wealth and sanctity. To no part of the city, occupying a space of twenty square miles, does the Ganges now approach nearer than four miles and a-half, and places formerly navigable are now twelve miles from the stream, which so unaccountably and capriciously forsook its ancient bed,

leaving behind it all the melancholy consequences of the alienation of a powerful ally.

There is something very poetical in the catastrophe of a city suffering under a fate which may be compared to the miseries resulting from human perfidy; and never did the fellest of war's dire bloodhounds, fire, sword, pestilence, or famine, commit more fearful havoc than that which has silently and stealthily devastated a city, once so fair that it was styled by the Emperor Humayoon, the abode of paradise. The wild luxuriance of vegetation, which characterizes Bengal, has nearly choked up the magnificent remains of Gour: a beautiful lake, adorned with many islands, spread its crystal waters to the eastward of a strong fortress; but both the lake and the citadel have vanished, and the splendours of the city can only be estimated by a few majestic remains of mosques, towers, and gateways, which still exist to shew how deeply it was indebted to architectural taste and skill. The buildings of Gour were very solidly constructed of brick and a stone which has been by many persons mistaken for marble, but which geologists pronounce to be hornblende: vast quantities of the materials have been carried away and sold for building in the neighbouring towns and

villages, but there are still large masses of strong masonry scattered over the surface of the ground, which have been so completely covered with brushwood, and so intermixed with the gigantic roots of trees, forcing themselves through the rifts made by time and the elements, as more to resemble huge mounds of earth, than the remains of human habitations.

The bricks with which Gour was built are remarkable for the solidity of their texture, the sharpness of their edges, and the smoothness of their surfaces,—characteristics which they have preserved through a series of ages, and which have rendered them a very marketable commodity. Many beautiful edifices have been destroyed without mercy, for the sake of the materials; and it is only the most solid which have defied the ruthless assaults of the pick-axe and crow-bar. Here are also to be found great abundance of the coarse enamelling resembling Dutch tiles, which at one period was so commonly used in the buildings of India. The painted Mosque, so called on account of its gay colours, is profusely decorated with this glazing, and the tomb of Hussein Shah is faced with bricks beautifully carved, and glazed in blue and white.

The arch of the principal gateway, which in picturesque beauty can scarcely be surpassed, is upwards of fifty feet in height; the wall is of correspondent thickness, and its massy strength promises to defy the ravages of time for centuries to come: it exhibits all the splendour of decoration common to the buildings of the Moslem conquerors in India, and perhaps no scene in the world can be dignified with more solemn grandeur than that which is displayed in these noble remains, forming an entrance to the wildest and most desolate jungle imaginable. Amidst the reeds which encumber the soil, may be seen the dwindled relics of fruits and flowers, now wild, which in other days adorned luxuriant gardens: the palm-tree still flourishes, but the coarser vegetation of all kinds is too redundant. The circulation of air is impeded, the weeds are permitted to wither and decay upon the ground, and from these deposits, and from the swamps produced by neglected tanks, miasma is created, which threatens the visitor with disease and death. A few feeble attempts have been made to bring land, which Nature has rendered exuberantly fertile, under cultivation; but the patience of the supine Bengallee has been wearied. The most effectual processes, those of cutting down the

brushwood and burning the weeds, have been neglected, and, content with a bare subsistence obtained amidst clouds of tormenting insects, the foulest air, and the most noxious vermin, the neighbouring population neglect the sources of wealth and comfort which lie so invitingly before them. The tanks, long neglected, and rendered pestilential by the impurities of their stagnant waters, swarm with alligators, and cannot be approached without danger, notwithstanding the pious exertions of resident *faqueers*, who employ themselves in the unenviable task of taming these stupid and hideous monsters.

The success attending efforts, which perhaps would have been more advantageous to the community at large if directed to the destruction of these formidable reptiles, shews that there is no nature so wholly brutish and cruel as not to be susceptible of improvement. The alligators of Gour have learned to distinguish the voice of kindness, and come readily to the call of those who have been at the pains of subduing their fierceness, taking a morsel of rice from the hands of their protectors, who, armed with the doctrine of fatalism, and totally indifferent to life, go fearlessly up to the very jaws which seem yawning for their destruction. In

those parts of India most pregnant with distempers, and most dreadfully infested with savage animals, religious ascetics, both Mahomedan and Hindoo, are certain to be found. It is not easy to say whether these people are actuated by religious enthusiasm or worldly ambition; as long as they exist they excite an extraordinary degree of veneration, which perchance may reconcile them to a life of the most horrible privation; but, as they very often establish themselves in remote and almost inaccessible places, they can have very little enjoyment of the reputation for which they must make such sacrifices. Remorse, or worldly disappointment, are among the causes which induce the religious ascetics of India to fly to the jungle, and associate with the wild beasts of the field; but with many it is merely a profession,—a mode of life to which they are called by caste or descent. No sooner has a *faqeer* been devoured by the tiger, or other dangerous companion, to whose tender mercies he has trusted, than a successor is ready to take his place, willing to encounter the same danger, and to perish by the same catastrophe: in fact, the people of India think it but proper that some kinds of deaths should be hereditary in a family; those especially whose

parents have been devoured by tigers, seek the same fortune, and few are known to desert places which have been peculiarly fatal to their relatives.

The extraordinary size and numbers of the alligators of Gour can be easily accounted for by the circumstances which are so particularly favourable to the growth of all descriptions of reptiles, the hot damp nature of the atmosphere, and the sliminess of the soil, the corruption and fermentation of vegetable matter, the fat weed left to rot in its own effluvia, and generating monsters; but alligators are numerous where these causes do not exist: tanks, which have been long dry, are no sooner filled with water from the periodical rains, than they are discovered to be peopled with reptiles, of which no trace had been previously seen. Persons unacquainted with the extraordinary precocity of the reptile tribe, imagine that these creatures must have found their way from distant waters; but they are in all probability hatched from eggs deposited in the neighbouring sand. The instant one of these amphibious monsters breaks its shell, it is perfectly competent to the care of its own subsistence; its first impulse is to seek for food, and if it escape the numerous enemies watching an opportunity to

make a meal, before it is strong enough to resist them, its growth is so rapid as almost to exceed belief.

The boa-constrictor is an inhabitant of the wood-encumbered ruins of Gour, where it attains to a very considerable size: one twenty-two feet long having been killed about the period of the visit made by Mr. Daniell, the artist, to whose pencil we are indebted for some striking delineations of this once celebrated place. Though still so close to the Ganges, few travellers have put themselves to the inconvenience of going a little out of their way to inspect the relics of a city possessing so many claims to notice. Several straggling villages are to be found upon the site, and there would not be much difficulty in converting the remains of eight bazaars, which are well placed for the purpose, into a flourishing town. Should the spirit of improvement reach the wealthy portion of the natives of India, they have a wide field before them; and, even as a vision of fancy, it is pleasing to imagine the swamps and wildernesses of Bengal, where the serpent broods, the tiger couches, and the wild boar whets his horrid tusks, converted into a smiling plain, shaded by the mango and the tamarind-tree, and peopled with innocent and happy creatures.

There are several buildings superior in beauty and elegance to anything of the kind to be found in the province of Bengal, which might still be preserved from farther decay. One of these, a minaret ninety feet in height and twenty-one feet in diameter at the base, is particularly striking. It is said to have been erected by Firoze Shah, one of the independent kings of Bengal, and as it stands in a part of the city which has been cleared of jungle, its beauties are not obscured by the too redundant growth of the forest, which has proved so inimical to many of its neighbours. A staircase in the interior leads to an open cupola at the top, whence a grand and extensive view may be obtained of the adjacent country. Several gateways remain in tolerable preservation. Trees are springing from the *Soonna Musjid*, or golden mosque; but its lower story is almost entire, and displays great architectural beauty both in the design and the execution of the ornaments. The *Chota Soonna Musjid*, or small golden mosque, has suffered even less from the ravages of time, and presents one of those splendid interiors in which a series of arches, succeeding and crossing each other, delight the eye from every point of view by the play of light and shadow, and the richness and grandeur of the effect. Another

mosque, not very materially injured by the numerous agencies which have been at work at Gour, has a great reputation for sanctity ; it is named the Kadan Rasul, from a small stone deposited there bearing the impression of a human foot, believed by the pious to have been made by Mahommed himself. This stone, according to tradition, was brought from Medina many years ago. Surajah Dowlah, the Napoleon of his day, carried it off, but it was restored by Meer Jaffier. This mosque, in consequence of its containing so precious a relic, and boasting the shrine of a celebrated saint besides, is much visited by pilgrims, and therefore has not been suffered to go to ruin like those which have only picturesque beauty to recommend them. One alone, amid the bridges erected over the drains and canals which intersected the roads, have been spared by people who estimated the value of these ruins by what they would bring at market. Europeans have been guilty of this barbarity, some of the works at Fort William having been constructed of stone taken from the tombs of the sovereigns of Gour. The city being in the road to Chirra Poonjee, a sanitarium lately established on the Siccim hills, and much frequented in the hot weather by visitors from Calcutta, Anglo-Indians have an

opportunity of making the only amends in their power for former outrages, by preserving all that now exists in this once celebrated place.

As a city, Gour is perhaps past recall; we must be content to see the ploughshare driven over the halls of kings, and modern cottages constructed from the crumbling brickwork of ancient palaces; but there are other places which might still be snatched from impending destruction. Of these, Mandoo is one of the most interesting. Though, like Gour, vegetation has sprung up so thickly and strongly, as almost to overwhelm many of the buildings, the ruins of Mandoo have not so completely yielded to the evil influences to which they have been exposed, and the situation is much finer and more striking. Originally Hindoo, the residence of the Dhar Rajas, it afterwards became subject to the Patan government, and upon its capture by Acbar, who made himself master of all the Mahomedan states in his neighbourhood, it fell gradually into decay. Mandoo is built upon a large tract of table-land, upon the summit of a mountain belonging to the Vindhyan range, in the province of Malwa, and upon the occupation of this part of the country by the British, it was found to be a shelter for predatory tribes, the strong-hold of

Bheels, who, after robbing and slaughtering in the plains, returned to this solitary fastness, which then effectually secured them from pursuit.

Upon the occupation of Malwa and the neighbouring provinces by the British, the Bheels were deprived of this sanctuary ; but they have hitherto, at least the greater portion of them, continued to lead the lawless life to which their forefathers were so strongly attached, and there appears to be more difficulty in spreading civilization amongst them than we have found with any other class or tribe of native Indians. Sir John Malcolm, who has left an enviable name behind him, wheresoever his duties led him to sojourn, was more successful than those who have succeeded him, (perhaps in consequence of having more power and better opportunities,) in persuading these poor people to submit to the established authorities. Like Mr. Cleveland with the hill tribes of Bengal, he tried the power of kindness and confidence, placing trust in those, who, accustomed to be distrusted, felt anxious to maintain the new character with which they had been invested. But there still remains a great deal to be done throughout the vast tracts of country almost wholly inhabited by these people. Though not considered equal in intellectual de-

velopment to the mountaineers of Europe, they share, with the highland freebooters of former days, the generosity and honour which seem common to the wildest tribes.

It often happens that regular campaigns are made against the Bheels, when they appear in force, threatening their more peaceable neighbours with an onslaught. Upon these occasions, if the young officers, who command the outposts, are fond of the glorious sports of an Indian jungle, they do not scruple to throw themselves completely into the power of those against whom they have been sent in arms, and in no instance have they been known to suffer from their confidence. The Bheels are much delighted with skill in shooting; they are also great admirers of English fire-arms, shewing all the wonder and surprise at double-barrels and percussion-locks, which such miraculous inventions are calculated to inspire amongst a rude people; with them, the Freyschutz would be no fable, and they regard the possessors of such magical instruments with the highest degree of veneration. In the bosom of civilized society, the young European adventurers, who have joined the morning's sport and the evening bivouac with the Bheels, have recurred with the greatest delight to the period

passed amongst a proscribed race, who seem to share the curse of the descendants of Ishmael, their hands being against every man, and every man's hand against them. Though the Bheels have been dispossessed of Mandoo, tigers are still there in great force, preferring the halls and chambers of palaces, to dens and caverns in the neighbouring woods. Parties, who come over from Mbow to visit the still splendid remains of the city, are in some danger of encountering tigers in the streets, they being the sole inhabitants, with the exception of the usual complement of *faqueers*, who supply a meal to their four-footed companions, when other game is scarce.

Notwithstanding the frightful neglect and desolation which have for so long a period characterized Mandoo, a very large portion of its buildings are still in a tolerable state of preservation. It possesses some of the most beautiful specimens of Afghan architecture to be found in Hindostan, and is celebrated for its reservoirs of water, and the subaqueous apartments around them, the luxurious retreats, during the hot winds, of the princes and potentates of this once populous district. The ship or water-palace, as it is indiscriminately called, is one of the most remarkable of the relics of

Mandoo; it is built upon a point of land between two large tanks, or rather lakes, and is as much admired for the beauty and picturesqueness of its architecture, as for the singularity of its situation. No one can look upon this delightful abode, without experiencing the most painful feelings of regret at the inevitable destruction to which it appears to be doomed. Not even in Gour, are the sensations produced by the total abandonment of a once splendid city by its human inhabitants, of so melancholy a nature as those which are excited by the awful stillness and utter solitude at Mandoo.

While in the occupation of Malwa, Sir John Malcolm took up his abode occasionally in this deserted city, and it sometimes attracts parties of visitors from the not very distant cantonments of Mhow; but there seems to be very little hope of its ever again becoming a busy haunt of men. The greater number of the buildings at this place are constructed of a fine red-stone, a favourite material throughout the Upper Provinces of Hindostan; but there is a beautiful mausoleum erected over the grave of Hussein Shah, entirely composed of white marble, brought all the way from the banks of the Nerbudda. Mandoo has been described by old writers as a city of vast extent, twenty-two miles in

circumference, and enough is still in existence to satisfy the visitor of the truth of this statement. It is only accessible from the plain below at one point, where there is a broad causeway, and a passage guarded by three gateways, still in good preservation, which leads through the rock to the summit of the mountain on which the city stands. The whole of this mountain is richly clothed with vegetation; gigantic trees spring from the rifts, and the buildings above are embosomed in a mass of splendid foliage. The surrounding country is exceedingly fruitful, and the plains are covered with a peculiar kind of grass, very finely scented, which gives out its perfume to the wandering breeze, and when pressed, yields an oil which has obtained a very high degree of celebrity on account of its medicinal qualities. At Calcutta, where there is some difficulty in getting it genuine, it sells at a high price, but at the places in which it is made it may be procured very cheaply: it is used in all rheumatic complaints with success, and both natives and Europeans hold it in great estimation.

The geology of the neighbourhood of Mandoo is exceedingly interesting, and perhaps there are few places in India where naturalists would find

their researches better rewarded. The whole of Malwa is remarkable for its botanical treasures, and the city of Mandoo is now one great menagerie, where the zoologist may study habits of beasts, birds, and reptiles, with great ease. To the antiquary, also, there would be infinite gratification in the inspection of the Afghan remains, which are of a superior character to those scattered over the other scenes of their conquests. These people are now little known out of Afghanistan, except in the character of traders, in which capacity they travel through the greater part of India, frequently penetrating as far as Calcutta, where their huge forms and strange complexions, of that clear darkness which is so distinct from the copper, or rather bronze colour of the native Indians, contrast very strongly with the swarthy diminutive races of Bengal. The Afghans claim to be descendants of Saul, king of Israel, and if features be any proof of Jewish origin, they have truth upon their side. Bishop Heber was struck by their resemblance to the pictures of the old Masters, and none who have ever seen the rabbis delineated by the painters of the Italian and Flemish schools, can fail to acknowledge the great similarity between them and the humble persons who sometimes

traverse vast distances in order to sell grapes, apples, dates, and pistachio nuts in Hindostan.

Mandoo, notwithstanding its exceeding beauty, and the romantic interest which clings around its mouldering towers, is surpassed in both by that splendid city, which Sir John Mackintosh has poetically styled, "The Palmyra of the Deccan." Were it not for the absence of marble, Bejapore might vie with Delhi and Agra, and perhaps neither of these places can boast of buildings equal in magnificence to the tomb of Mahmood Shah, or the durga of Ibrahim Padshah in the gardens of the Twelve Imaums. After the partition of Aurungzebe's mighty empire, Bejapore, which, during the short period of two hundred years, existed as an independent Mahomedan kingdom, governed by the princes of the Adil Shah dynasty, fell into the hands of the Mahrattas, and it is only very lately that it has been accessible to European visitants.

Though not so totally abandoned as Mandoo, the city contains a very scanty population, composed chiefly of Mahomedan priests, and religious beggars, attached to the different mosques and durgas, the poorer classes of Mahrattas, and a few more orthodox Hindoos: the latter rejoice

greatly in a small tank containing liquid of a milky hue, which they assert to be the true water of the Ganges, brought by a pious Brahmin to the city, and renewed in all its sanctity by some miraculous process. The city consists of two parts, both surrounded by a wall, that comprizing the citadel, being much more strongly fortified than the remaining portion. At a little distance, it does not betray the ruin and desolation which lurk within ; cannon still bristle upon the bastions, and the immense assemblage of towers, domes, pinnacles, and spires, which shoot up into the sky, partially intermixed with tamarind and other trees, deceives the distant spectators, who cannot imagine that they are about to enter a vast wilderness, where the human habitations have crumbled into dust, leaving mosques and mausoleums to tell the tale of former glory. Though the palaces, which once graced Bejapore, could not have been inferior in splendour to any of the imperial residencies still existing in India, they have suffered to a far greater extent than the tombs and temples in their neighbourhood : many of the latter still being perfect, and promising to survive during many centuries.

Notices of Bejapore are scattered throughout

many publications, but a regular history, or a continuation of that given by Ferishta, is still wanting, and it is scarcely possible to imagine any subject connected with Indian records, which would be so interesting. After the first irruptions under Mahmood Ghizni, into India, the whole country offered a field for Mahomedan adventurers, who required little more than an enterprising spirit and military skill, to establish their fortunes amid the troubles and distractions of the native powers. Yoosoof Adil Shah, the founder of Bejapore, is said to have been a son of the Turkish Emperor Bajazet, who, being saved in the general massacre of his brothers, by the substitution of a slave-boy, about his own age, was sent into a foreign country for safety, and when he attained to manhood, turning his steps to India, acquired some renown in the wars of the Deccan. Upon the death of his patron, the Patan empire falling into pieces, Yoosoof was encouraged to found a new kingdom, and to place himself at the head of it. He succeeded in his object, and, notwithstanding the internal troubles and the foreign wars in which his successors were more or less engaged, during the whole period of their dynasty, they have left works behind them which would seem to

require a protracted interval of the most profound peace. There is scarcely any city in India which boasts of public erections of so much splendour and utility as Bejapore; the aqueducts, which are still in existence, are of the most extensive and superb description, and there are fountains, wells, tanks, and *bowlees*, all solidly constructed, either of stone, or finely tempered *chunam*, nearly innumerable.

The sovereigns of Bejapore maintained a good understanding with the Moghul emperors until the reign of Aurungzebe, who, almost without a pretext, put an end to a kingdom which he might have rendered tributary. It is said that his favourite daughter pointed out to him the probable effects of the narrow policy to which his selfish ambition would lead, but he paid no attention to her remonstrances, refusing to permit any monarch, even professing the same creed, to exist within the wide circle of his dominions. In weakening the Mahomedan power by the deposition of the sovereigns of the Deccan, Aurungzebe precipitated the fall of his successors, by giving advantages to the Mahrattas, who were beginning to shew manifestations of their rising greatness, which ought not to have passed unnoticed. Almost before

Aurangzebe was cold in his grave, they possessed themselves of the kingdom which he had so unjustifiably wrested from its founders, and a very short period of time saw them masters of the territories which he had purchased at the expense of so many crimes. From the moment that Bejapore fell into the hands of the Mahrattas, its decay commenced ; nothing ever flourished under the rule of a people equally destitute of public virtue, and of all relish for the refinements of civilized life. They plundered and massacred wherever they went, and grovelled in filth, in the mud huts which they erected amid the smoking ruins of stately palaces.

When the British officers, who served in the wars of the Deccan, beheld Bejapore, which until that period had been rarely visited by Europeans, they were astonished by the splendour which greeted their eyes upon every side. Major Moor, in one of his early works, writes thus : “ We cannot but feel how inadequate we are to describe the meanest of a thousand buildings in this wonderful city, and would be very glad to see a pen better skilled in these matters so worthily employed. Ours was but a transient view, and for our own part, totally unused to such sights, we

were so lost in admiration as scarcely to believe what we saw to be realities."

The walls of the citadel and the principal buildings of the city are of hewn stone, which is susceptible of a very high polish, some of the interiors shining with all the splendour of marble: the masonry also is well worthy of notice, many of the finest specimens of architecture being put together without the aid of cement. At the close of the campaigns under the Duke of Wellington, Bejapore was given up to the rajah of Satara, and since that period the progress of decay has been partially arrested. The revenues of some of the neighbouring villages have been set apart for the maintenance of the attendants at the tombs and mosques, and though neglect is but too visible, the visitors are not disgusted with the impurities which so speedily collect where bats and birds are permitted to dwell unmolested. There would be little difficulty in restoring the greater portion of the decaying splendours of Bejapore, although some of its finest edifices are past recall.

The tomb of Mahmood Shah, from some defect in its construction, is reported to be in a very dangerous condition; the foundation has sunk, and the walls in more than one place are split from top

to bottom. This gigantic, but somewhat heavy pile, may vie with the finest cathedrals in Europe, both in size and grandeur; the great dome, called by the natives the burra Gumbooz, is larger than the cupola of St. Paul's and only inferior in dimensions to that of St. Peter's at Rome. It is said that a silver shrine formerly covered the remains of Mahmood Shah, which are deposited in an immense hall beneath the dome; but this became the spoil of the Mahrattas, and the sarcophagi of the king and his family are now only remarkable for a very ugly, though highly-esteemed, coating of holy earth, brought from Mecca, mingled with sandalwood dust, and formed into a coarse plaster.

The *durga* of Abou al Muzzuffer differs very widely in its style from that of Mahmood Shah, and though an immense pile, is distinguished for the lightness and elegance of its architecture. The interior is most exquisitely ornamented with enamelling of gold upon a blue and a black ground, the latter being polished so highly as to look like glass. It is said that the whole of the Koran is contained in the embellishments of this splendid edifice, emblazoned in large characters intermixed with arabesques tastefully sculptured in elegant combinations of fruit and flowers.

Ibrahim Adil Shah, to whose memory this superb mausoleum is dedicated, was one of the most popular of the sovereigns of Bejapore. He has left a name behind him equally revered both by Moslem and Hindoo, and his shrine is visited by the worshippers of Brihm, as well as the disciples of the prophet, each regarding him as a saint to whom their devotions may be paid with advantage to themselves. The corrupted state of Mahomedanism in India is strongly exhibited at Bejapore, where the true believers, now few and of no weight in the community, are little better than idolators.

There is a large piece of brass ordnance at Bejapore, which is an object of veneration amongst all castes and sects, who pay to the unseen power, lodged in this engine of destruction, homage almost amounting to divine honours. Many fabulous legends are told by the natives about this gun, which is named *Mulk-i-Meidan*, 'sovereign of the plain,' and which became the spoil of Ali Adil Shah, who took it in battle against the king of Ahmednuggur. The weight of the Monarch of the Plain is forty tons, and it is of correspondent dimensions, so large in fact, that it has never yet been charged with the quantity of powder which its chamber would contain. The metal of which

it is composed is said to have a considerable portion of silver, and a smaller quantity of gold, mixed with the tin and copper forming its chief materials. When struck, it emits a clear, but somewhat awful sound, similar to that of an enormous bell, which is endurable only at a considerable distance. The mighty voice given forth by a touch, added to the terrible idea of havoc conveyed by this formidable piece of artillery, doubtless has assisted in impressing the natives with a feeling of reverence towards a prodigy of strength and power, which they cannot imagine to have been wholly the work of man. They burn incense before it, smear it over with cinnabar and oil, wreath it with flowery garlands, and never approach it without joined hands and countenances expressive of the highest degree of reverence and devotion.

There is a tradition current at Bejapore, respecting a sister of the *Mulk-i-Meidan*, named *Kurk-o-Budglee*, 'thunder and lightning;' but no authentic account has been preserved of it, and its existence has been doubted. Yet, as the natives of India seem always to have been ambitious of possessing themselves of pieces of ordnance beyond the ordinary size,—the great gun at Agra being one of the best known specimens,—we must not too hastily reject

the tales told about the *Kurk-o-Budglee*, which is said to have been carried to Poonah. The *Mulk-i-Meidan* is sometimes fired, but upon very rare occasions. The rajah of Satara did Sir John Malcolm the honour of saluting him with the discharge of this celebrated gun, and the accounts of the effects it produced will probably prevent it from being again the cause of similar catastrophes : some of the old buildings came down ; others shook to their foundations, and several women were frightened to death by the horrors of the concussion.

During the brief period of the Adil Shah dynasty, the Portuguese obtained a settlement at Goa. Unfortunately, their chronicles are of a very confused description, and afford little information respecting the events which were passing around them. We learn nothing from their accounts of the beauty and magnitude of a city, which must from its very commencement have been one of the most remarkable places in India. Tavernier, who was the earliest European traveller in the Deccan, either could not have seen it, or must have wilfully misrepresented a place, which he describes as having nothing worthy of note, excepting the crocodiles inhabiting the surrounding ditch. Beja-

pore is not now famous for its alligators; their existence in the moat has been denied, and this extraordinary city is still without an historian, there being scarcely even the most brief catalogue extant of the various objects calculated to attract the attention of the curious.

The Turkish descent of Yoosif Adil Shah, his Persian connexions, and the foreigners from other countries whom he invited to his court, and who were entertained by him and his successors with truly regal magnificence, occasioned the introduction of a greater variety in the styles of the different buildings of Bejapore, than is to be found in any other city in India. A few pencils have been employed in delineating some of the most splendid; but volumes would be required to give an adequate idea of the architectural beauties of this unaccountably neglected place. During the long period in which the continent was closed to adventurous footsteps, it seems wonderful that India should not have been more attractive to persons of truant disposition. The works of Daniell and of Salt were, or ought to have been, sufficient to shew that the plains of Hindostan possessed objects meriting attention; but they were suffered to pass unheeded, and few seemed to think India worthy

of a thought, until the publication of the journal of the late Bishop Heber afforded newer and juster ideas of a country replete with interest.

Bejapore is celebrated for its tamarind trees; the groves which have arisen amidst the once populous streets and thoroughfares of this extensive capital, have not, as at Gour and Mandoo, completely usurped the soil, or become the agent of desolation: the growth of vegetation is slower in the arid plains of the Deccan; and the green canopy of the trees, and the cool shades beneath them, are particularly agreeable amidst the immense masses of buildings. The inhabited part of Bejapore bears a very small proportion to the space which is almost wholly deserted; large tracts occur entirely covered with ruins, the remnants of dwelling-houses long laid prostrate on the earth. Emerging from these dreary-looking fragments, we come to some splendid building still entire, and while passing through immense quadrangles, watered by fountains and adorned with flowers, we can scarcely believe they are situated amid a wide waste of ruins. The fort is garrisoned by a few Mahratta soldiers, who keep the guns in tolerable order; and every season increases the number of visitants, attracted by the report of the architectural wonders of the place.

There are several fine tanks and reservoirs of water kept in good preservation; one of these, which bears the name of the *Taj Bowlee*, is a splendid piece of workmanship, surrounded by a *serai*, for the accommodation of travellers, and approached through a noble gateway. Very little of the ground which is unoccupied by buildings has been brought under cultivation, and the whole of the country around the city exhibits marks of neglect. The inhabitants, who are not numerous, are perhaps too poor to repair the ravages of war, or they have not yet acquired confidence in the security of property. The noble ambition which would lead to the restoration of fading splendour, does not appear to belong to the native character. Though displaying a passion for the pomp of architecture, they have no pleasure in preserving the works of others from decay; comparatively slight exertions would suffice to avert the fate which seems impending over Bejapore; but, if left to the public spirit of the ruling powers, we fear that there is little chance of its ever regaining any of the advantages it has lost, and it is impossible not to regret that this beautiful city belonged to the ceded portion of the district.

Religious mendicants abound in Bejapore; *these*

are chiefly of the Mahomedan persuasion; although, besides the small pond, supposed to contain the holy water of the Ganges, there is a Hindoo temple, of such great antiquity, as to be said to be the work of the Pandoos, the architects to whom the cathedral-like excavations of Ellora are attributed. This temple is extremely low, the roof resting upon clusters of pillars formed of single stones, and apparently belonging to an age earlier, or at least ruder, than that which produced the magnificent designs and rich sculptures of the cave-temples.

Many of the *faqueers*, before-mentioned, subsist entirely upon casual charity, having nothing from the religious edifices, which they have made their abode, excepting the shelter of a roof; others receive a regular stipend from the government, and it is to their zeal that the tombs and mosques are indebted for the cleanliness which a true believer is always desirous to maintain in every shrine. It is the custom, in many Mahomedan temples in India, to make offerings of cloths for canopies and other things, which are either divided amongst the *moollahs* in attendance, or sold for their benefit; but Bejapore, though boasting many saints, attracts few pilgrims; while other *durgas*,

greatly inferior in splendour, and not more celebrated for the ashes they contain, are bountifully endowed by the contributions of the pious. The few rupees which Christians disburse amongst the persons in care of the numerous places of worship, form nearly the sole source of emolument of the priesthood at Bejapore, independent of the scanty sum already mentioned as being devoted to their maintenance. From these men, very little information which can be depended upon is gained; they launch out into wild and improbable tales, entertaining enough in themselves, but disappointing to persons really desirous to become acquainted with facts relating to some of the nameless tombs and temples prodigally scattered in every quarter of the city.

The notion that vast treasures are concealed amidst the ruins, is very prevalent, and would be the making of the fortune of an adept of the Douts-wivel genus. Many persons have been known to speculate in the purchase of an old wall; but as yet the success of these experiments has not been made public. Even Runjeet Sing and the Begum Sumroo do not appear, clever and well-informed as they both undoubtedly are, to be aware of the superior security of a foreign bank to any

subterranean place of deposit for their surplus wealth; and as they are said to bury money every year, there can be little doubt that this favourite expedient was resorted to in former times all over India.

Bejapore, in all probability, possesses concealed mines of gold and gems; but, without the aid of the divining rod, it would be very difficult to discover them. One small mausoleum, called the *Mootee gil*, is said to derive its name from an interior coating of *chunam* formed of pounded pearls. A nobleman, who possessed a vast quantity of these valuable gems, excited the envy of the reigning prince, and was in danger of being arrested upon a charge of treason, the only pretext which could be devised to deprive him of the coveted treasures. Obtaining timely notice of the plot, he explained the predicament in which he stood to the ladies of the *xenana*, who, determining to defeat the object which the tyrant had in view, destroyed all the value of the prize, by reducing the pearls to powder. It was no longer considered worth while to pursue the owner of a heap of useless dust, and the monarch spared himself a crime by which there was nothing to be gained: the pounded gems were, it is said, afterwards given

to a religious person, who converted them into *chunam*, and made it the decoration of a tomb, which assuredly appears to be stuccoed with some very precious material.

Weeks, nay, even months, might be spent in the examination of all the curious objects which Bejapore affords, and there could scarcely be a more interesting task than that of filling up the meagre details, with which alone we have hitherto been furnished, concerning a city which has been so unaccountably cheated of its well-merited renown.

CHAPTER VI.

ENVIRONS OF CALCUTTA.

BARRACKPORE, SERAMPORE, AND DUM DUM.

IT has been the policy of the Indian Government to separate soldiers and citizens from each other; the forces, therefore, which are considered necessary for the defence of Calcutta, are stationed, the infantry at the distance of sixteen miles, and the artillery at eight, from the seat of government. Fort William,—a strong-hold to which the Governor-general may retire in case of invasion from abroad or rebellion at home, and considered by experienced engineers to be impregnable,—which will contain provisions and stores to withstand a siege as long as that of Troy,—in times of security, is garrisoned by a single King's regiment, or a part of two at the most, the sepoy duties being performed by a detachment from Barrackpore, relieved at stated periods, while the guard employed in Calcutta is composed of the city militia.

Barrackpore is an irregularly-built station, situated on the left bank of the Hooghley. Many

of the houses are as splendid as the mansions of the neighbouring city, but the larger portion consist of bungalows, considerably smaller than those of the Upper Provinces, but generally speaking, more carefully finished, and built and fitted up in a superior style. A few look upon the river, but there is no broad esplanade, as upon the opposite bank, where Serampore's proud palaces are mirrored on the glassy surface of the stream. Those mansions, however, which do command the fresh breezes from the water, are delightfully cool, and the views from the balconies are superb; for it is scarcely possible to imagine any thing more grand and imposing, in an architectural display, than the splendid settlement of the Danes upon the Hooghley. The beauties of Barrackpore are of a different kind; its buildings are embosomed in trees, and with the exception of the palace of the Governor-general, which is raised in a commanding situation, only peep out between the branches of luxuriant groves. The country all round is wooded to excess, affording a most agreeable shade, and offering specimens of floral magnificence not to be surpassed in any part of the world. The magnolia attains to a gigantic size, and fills the air with perfume from its silvery vases; other forest-

trees bear blossoms of equal beauty; the richly-wreathed pink acacia, and numerous tribes, adorned with garlands of deep crimson and bright yellow, abound; and although, with the exception of the park, which has been raised into sweeping undulations by artificial means, the cantonments and their vicinity present a flat surface, the combinations of wood, water, and green sward, in numberless vistas, nooks, and small open spaces, yield scenes of tranquil beauty, which eyes however cold can scarcely contemplate unmoved.

Though an authoritative mandate from the Court of Directors, dictated by unaffected alarm, put an effective stop to the completion of one of the Marquess of Wellesley's most splendid projects, Barrackpore is still indebted to him for a park, which is justly considered one of the finest specimens of dressed and ornamented nature which taste has ever produced. Enough has been done to the mansion to render it a very elegant and commodious residence, and the gardens attached to it are unrivalled both in beauty and stateliness, combining the grandeur of Asiatic proportions with the picturesqueness of European design. The gravelled avenues are wide enough to allow wheel-carriages to pass, and these ample paths wind

through broad parterres, and shrubberies of the most brilliant flowers, sometimes skirting along high walls of creeping plants trained against lofty trees, at others overlooking large tanks so completely covered with the pink blossoms of the lotus, as to conceal the element in which this splendid aquatic plant delights. A large stud of elephants is kept at Barrackpore, and these noble animals, decorated with flowing *jhools* of scarlet cloth, edged with gold, and bearing fair freights of ladies belonging to the vice-regal court, may be seen pacing along the flowery labyrinths, to European eyes strange guests in a private garden. These blooming plantations afford excellent parrot-shooting, a sport to which some of the great men of the presidency are said to be much addicted, but which it grieves persons possessed of the slightest degree of sentiment to see carried on in the secluded haunts of a pleasure-ground, and against those bright-winged visitants, whose gem-like plumage adds so much of ornament to the scene.*

* There are several varieties of the paroquet tribe in Bengal, some of them the loveliest little creatures imaginable, with purple heads covered with bloom like a freshly-ripened plum; others ring-necked, with slender elegant bodies, and exceedingly long tails.

The park has been laid out and planted with great care and taste; it affords specimens of trees which are not to be found congregated together in any other part of India: some of these exotics are particularly distinguished for their size and beauty, and are objects of great interest to all the visitors. The elevated portions of Barrackpore Park command extensive views of the superb sweeps of the river, with their enchanting varieties of scenery, their rich woods and noble residences, the broad ghaut intervening, and occasionally a tower-encircled dome or light minar, rising from the umbrageous groves.

Barrackpore, as it may be easily imagined, is a great resort for all classes of persons from Calcutta; it is not yet furnished with an hotel or a boarding-house of any kind for the reception of strangers, who must be billeted by letters of introduction upon private families. Doubtless, this desideratum, if it be one, will be soon supplied, as in the influx of Europeans which the new order of things will bring to India, private hospitality must be speedily worn out. The distance from Calcutta is sixteen miles, and it is approached on the land side by one of the finest roads in the world, very broad, kept in excellent repair, and shaded, to the

great delight and comfort of the various traversers, by an avenue of trees. The traffic is of course very considerable, the tide interfering with the water-carriage; *coolies* and *hurkaras* of every description are journeying to and fro at all hours of the day.

Notwithstanding the shelter afforded by the leafy canopy above, Europeans do not often venture to brave the noon-tide heat, except in the mildest season of the year, their progress being chiefly performed in the morning or evening. Half-way, at a place which bears the name of Cox's Bungalow, relays of horses, for those who travel in wheel-carriages, are stationed; the customary number of bearers will, however, convey a palanquin the whole distance; and in the days of velocipedes, young men, easily incited to deeds of enterprise, have been known to go up in the morning and return at night, with no assistance save that afforded by their wooden chargers: a feat which the climate of Bengal renders worthy of record, for even in the cold weather violent exercise of any kind is attended with some danger. The journey to Barrackpore must be enchanting to those who delight in forest-scenery; the hand of man is apparent in the smooth, finely-levelled road, which offers itself to

the traveller : but a dense jungle appears to close it in on either side. Native huts, of the wildest and simplest construction, meet the eye in the most picturesque situations, many with scarcely any roof excepting that afforded by the overhanging branches of trees, which never lose their leafy mantles, yet not destitute of an air of comfort ; the floors, of coarse but well-tempered *chunam*, being scrupulously clean, and the jars and other domestic utensils neatly arranged and kept in order. Monkeys may be detected, disporting amidst blossoming boughs ; the jackall glides through the covert, and the woods echo with the sullen notes of lonely birds. The denseness of the population, and the vast numbers of natives, who go on their way rejoicing in the shade, which tends so much to lighten their toils, prevent all idea of solitude, though the prospects are so truly and exclusively sylvan, that it is not until the suburbs of Calcutta are approached, that the traveller can imagine himself in the close vicinity of the capital of Bengal. Beyond these suburbs, there is nothing of the stir and tumult usually to be seen in the outskirts of a large city ; few private conveyances of any kind, and no public Anglo-Indian vehicle : an omnibus was attempted, but did not succeed. At the time of its

starting, there were too many prejudices to contend against; few would condescend to enter it except by way of frolic, and it was soon laid up in ordinary in the builder's yard. The time is perhaps not far distant when the echoes of the Barrackpore woods may be startled by the thumping of a steam-engine, and the passengers learn to encounter the heat of a furnace added to that which they now find so difficult to endure.

This fine road is preferred, by the visitors to Serampore, to the less direct communication on the other side of the river, though it involves the necessity of crossing the Hooghley in a boat. The beauty of the latter-named place, its delightful situation, the easy distance from Calcutta, and the comparative cheapness of its bazaars, would render it a very desirable retreat for the families of many persons engaged in mercantile business at the presidency, were it not for the circumstance of its being a sanctuary against the merciless hostilities of Calcutta creditors. Under the control of a Danish governor, and protected by its own peculiar laws, it offers an asylum for persecuted debtors, and is in fact a sort of *Alsatia*, where those who dread the horrors of a writ betake themselves until they can arrange their affairs. A residence at Seram-

pore, therefore, is productive of a very unpleasant imputation, and few voluntarily encounter the stigma attached to it. This small and beautiful settlement forms also the Gretna Green of Bengal, at which parties may not only contract a clandestine marriage, but, when tired of the connexion, divorce each other with very little trouble and expense. Privileges so tempting, to the credit of the neighbouring community, are not often taken advantage of, and the place is happily more celebrated for its missionary college and press than for the labours of those who supply the places of proctors and other functionaries connected with ecclesiastical courts.

Serampore is, without exception, the best-built and best-kept European settlement in India. In addition to its superb esplanade, which stretches along the river's bank, it is composed of several regular streets, presenting a succession of handsome houses, inclosed in spacious gardens and interspersed with fine trees; the whole is kept scrupulously clean by the daily task-work of the convicts, who carefully weed the roads, and remove every unsightly object. The society at Serampore is very limited; the appointments of the governor are by no means splendid; he lives in a style of great simplicity, without affecting any state, appearing in public in

a handsome but plain equipage, generally a palanquin, attended by a few *chobdars*, who brandish their silver maces and make as much noise as they can to arouse the world with the intelligence that the *burra sahib* is passing by : a mode of procedure which the natives think necessary to establish their own importance as well as that of their master. Besides the governor, there are not many official situations of consequence ; a small number of merchants, and the families of gentlemen attached to the missionary college, comprise the principal residents ; the rest are made up of people of very dubious rank, and strangers, whose claims to respectability are, from the occasion of their sojourn, of course rather doubtful. The religious creed of many of the settled inhabitants indispose them to gaiety of any kind, and the Danish residents seem to cultivate retired and domestic habits ; there is consequently less visiting, party-giving, or festivities of any description, going on at Serampore than in any other place in India under European sway.

Notwithstanding these circumstances, Serampore must certainly be styled a cheerful town, and it is in many respects preferable to its military neighbour. The esplanade, after sunset, usually ex-

hibits a very gay scene; it is the only place in Bengal in which custom sanctions a promenade: the whole of the European population is poured forth, some in carriages, but the majority on foot, to enjoy the refreshing gales from the water, and the beauties of the surrounding prospect. These frequently attract large parties from the opposite cantonments; groupes of well-dressed ladies, many without bonnets, which are not deemed necessary appendages in the hot seasons, are seen surrounding the *ton-jaun* which conveys some less robust friend. Gentlemen are, of course, in full attendance; and cadets especially, rejoice in their freedom from military restraint, and in the indulgence of pedestrian exercise, which is deemed *infra dig.* at the presidency. The tide also brings numerous visitors from Calcutta, particularly the officers of trading vessels, anxious to penetrate into the interior, and to travel, as they term it, up the country.

There would be some difficulty in imagining a more beautiful scene than that which evening presents at Serampore. The breadth of the river, its superb sweeps, the woody promontories which jut into it, diversified by picturesque buildings; the varied richness of the foliage; the myriads of fire-flies, and the silvery brightness of the waters re-

taining the last crimson flush of sun-set, until night comes to pave the shining surface with stars, form altogether so enchanting a combination that fancy delights to recal the landscape in all its original splendour.

Barrackpore, as a military station, is in bad odour with the officers of the Bengal army; very few appear to appreciate the advantages of being so near to the festal scenes of Calcutta; the climate of the Upper Provinces is esteemed of superior salubrity, and the very name of *half-batta* is sufficient to render it hateful. Exclusive of the temptations to expense, which a large society must always hold forth, the actual rate of living at Barrackpore, even with the diminution of the *batta*, cannot possibly be higher than that of more remote stations, where European commodities are double and sometimes treble in price. The conveniences of life are infinitely more abundant, and its pleasures incalculably greater; nevertheless, it has an ill-repute, and by a happy adaptation of taste to the scenes selected for the most permanent abode of the Company's military servants, the Mofussil is generally preferred to the neighbourhood of the metropolis.

The society of Barrackpore is too large to admit

of that close and constant intercourse, which is carried on at less populous stations, where the domestication of persons must be pleasant or the reverse, according as their tastes and habits are suited to those of each other ; but it offers the great advantage of a choice of acquaintance ; news, fashions, and the latest publications from England, France, and America, are easily attainable ; the balls and parties of Calcutta are within reach ; and all the enjoyments derivable from the beauties of cultivated nature are afforded in the lovely landscapes which appear on every side.

The garrison at Barrackpore consists of several regiments of sepoy, under the command of a major-general ; the staff is exceedingly numerous, embracing appointments peculiar to the station. There are besides a considerable number of private residents, the families of retired officers, and widows who, possessing large connexions in India, prefer it as a residence to the parent state ; many of these persons enjoy considerable wealth, and live in a style of appropriate splendour. Nevertheless, the society is subjected to great vicissitudes, and its gaiety cannot be depended upon for more than the passing season. The caprice of some, the unsocial disposition of others, or the stoppage of a

house of agency, will put an end for a time to all festivities; and the extreme of dullness prevails until a change in the regiments, or some other equally favourable circumstances, occur to give a fresh impetus to the flagging spirits of the community. The presence of the Governor-general is not always productive of the gaiety which is generally expected to be the accompaniment of a vice-regal court.

Barrackpore is frequently resorted to by the chief person in the state, as a retreat from the toils of business and the scarcely less fatiguing duties entailed upon him at public entertainments. Few balls or fêtes of any kind are given at the Park, possibly to avoid the offence which the exclusion of visitors from Calcutta might give, and the great inconvenience resulting from their attendance. The last affair of the kind proved a complete failure, in consequence of an unexpected gale from the southwest; a contingency from which Bengal only for the short period of the cold season is altogether free. A very large proportion of the guests determined to go up by water, anticipating a delightful excursion by starlight; but the horrors of the storm burst upon them ere they could reach their destination; the Hooghley ran mountains high,

washing over the decks of the frail little summer-vessels, and driving many on shore, to the consternation of the passengers and the utter ruin of their ball-dresses. The travellers by land were not better off; the horses took fright at the lightning; the road was rendered impassable by trees torn up by the roots; ladies, terrified out of their senses, made an attempt to walk, and the party, when collected at last, presented a most lugubrious spectacle, a concourse of wet, weary, miserable guests, eagerly impatient to return to their homes, yet compelled to await more favourable weather.

The society at Barrackpore is sufficiently extensive not only to admit of selection, but also to allow its leaders the indulgence of the exclusiveness so much the fashion at home. Persons who consider themselves eligible are sometimes left out of the invitations to the station-balls, and parties more strictly private are scrupulously composed of families of a certain rank, a distinction unknown in the Mofussil, and which is very grievous to bear: at least, such are the complaints alleged against Barrackpore by discontented individuals; but these statements must be taken with some grains of allowance, the extent of the evil depending entirely upon the temper of those persons who

hold the highest offices, and who remain too short a time stationary to give a permanent tone to society.

Cadets, formerly, on their arrival at Calcutta, were permitted to travel alone, or in company with one or two other lads, as raw and as ignorant as themselves, to the places of their destination; but this is no longer the case. Inexperienced boys, ripe and ready for all sorts of mischief, were found to be woeful mismanagers of their own concerns, and to be too ready to trespass on the rights and privileges of the natives; they rarely penetrated far into the interior without getting into some scrape, the least of their exploits being the squandering of all their money at the first halt upon the road, with the consequence of depending upon their skill in foraging for the remainder of the journey. Cheated by dishonest natives, they were apt to take revenge upon those who were so unfortunate as to fall into their clutches; and considering all the surrounding temptations, it is only wonderful that so few outrages were committed by the wild youth let loose in a foreign country, and inflated with the idea of their own importance. Many amusing narratives may be gathered from the sober lips of veterans, pleased to recal the sports and

frolics of their boyish days; but tragic incidents sometimes occurred, and it was at length found expedient to appoint cadets, posted to regiments stationed at distant places, to do duty at Barrackpore until they could be sent up the river in a fleet under the care of an experienced officer. Here they are taught their first military lessons, and as the duties are performed under the eye of a major-general, they are usually glad to escape to some station where they hope to enjoy a greater degree of liberty, since, however exciting the perils and fatigues encountered in a hot campaign, there is apparently nothing more irksome to a soldier, nothing that is found to be so fertile a subject of complaint, as the necessity of attending drill, of appearing on parade, of mounting guard, and of dressing according to regulation. This last appears to be the greatest grievance of all. A soldier, even in uniform, seems to take a pleasure in making himself look as unmilitary as possible, and his chief care appears to be to evade or defy the orders issued respecting the precise quantity of accoutrements to be worn, and the manner of wearing them. Droll exhibitions are sometimes made by the cadets of Barrackpore, who, ere the first gloss has faded from the uniforms which were the objects of their school-

day ambition, ape the toil-worn soldier, and grumble over the annoyance of "being in harness."

The regulations in force respecting the Indian army are framed, however, with the greatest attention to the comfort of both privates and officers. During the hot weather, the uniform is composed of white calico decorated with the regimental button, and officers upon duty are only required to wear a jacket, which is termed a *raggee*, and which may be made of the thinnest scarlet or blue cashmere, China crape, or China silk; frock coats are often manufactured of the latter material, and worn in undress, while young civilians, who, though under no such restrictions, are not fond of exhibiting themselves in the guise of a barber or a cook, appear in swallow-tailed coats of China crape, which, when well-made, are often mistaken for cloth. At set dinners, where to arrive in *deshabille* might be considered as an affront, the male guests, if not provided with silk attire, usually direct their bearers (*Anglicè*, valets) to take a white jacket to the entertainer's house, in the hope that they may be invited to substitute it for a more cumbrous garment; and at Calcutta and Barrackpore, where strangers may not be aware that this option will be given them, the master of the mansion usually

issues out a number of jackets from his own wardrobe, which he offers to the new arrivals, and the ante-chambers are straightway converted into dressing-rooms. It is only at grand parties, and under the surveillance of general officers, that the military guests are compelled to endure the horrors of warm clothing; but there are some commandants, who are themselves such dried-up and withered anatomies, that they have no compassion for the more corpulent portion of their species, and compel those who have the misfortune to be placed under their control, to submit to a process to which the sufferings of a Newmarket jockey in training are nothing. The exceeding ugliness of the dress adopted by the most refined nations of Europe is in no place more apparent than in India, where it is contrasted with the flowing garments of the natives, and where absolute necessity obliges the wearers to have it fabricated from the same materials which compose the wide trowsers and graceful vests of their attendants. The round sailor's jacket and tight trowsers, brought by the early factors from their ships, have obtained to this day in India, and while less elegant native customs have found universal favour in European eyes, the greatest possible distinction in dress has been

thought necessary. Without pretending to discuss the wisdom of this policy, it may be said that the effect is absolutely shocking to persons of any taste. At Calcutta and Barrackpore, the barbarisms in dress are the most striking, for custom renders them familiar, and by the time that the travellers have reached the Upper Provinces, they have become habituated, if not reconciled, to the sight of gentlemen clothed from head to foot in ill-shaped garments of white cotton, in which the greatest dandy can only distinguish himself by the quantity of the starch.

The cemetery at Barrackpore is better kept than most places of a similar kind in India. It stands in a cheerful situation, not far from the park, and quite close to a handsome residence belonging to an officer on the staff, whose lovely and healthy family, while the writer partook of the ready hospitalities of his mansion, afforded a pleasing contradiction to the tale told by the too numerous graves and monuments. But the climate of Barrackpore must not be estimated by the number of deaths which take place in it, since persons in ill-health, from the Upper Provinces, frequently breathe their last at this place, upon the eve of their embarkation for Europe, and new arrivals from colder countries fall

victims to imprudencies, which cannot be committed with impunity in any part of India.

Dum Dum, the cantonment selected for the headquarters of the Bengal artillery, does not owe so much to nature as its neighbouring military station. The lines occupy an extensive plain, unmarked by any feature worthy of peculiar notice, the little beauty it possesses being entirely the work of art : handsome houses are scattered irregularly about, with pleasure-grounds around them, which are generally planted with care and taste. The mess-room and its accompaniments form a very superb building, affording suites of apartments upon a far more magnificent scale than those belonging to any European barrack. The splendour of Woolwich fades before the grandeur of Dum Dum ; but the balls, which are given in the latter place every month are not kept up with the same degree of spirit which characterizes the parties at Woolwich, and even when the dulness which frequently pervades Calcutta might be supposed to render them of great importance, are very ill-attended by visitors from the presidency. Thirty or forty ladies, occupying the top of an immense apartment, surrounded by all the beaux who have any hope of being noticed by them, afford a tantalising spectacle to crowds of

young men, taking up their modest stations at a distance, and looking at the dance without daring to indulge the slightest expectation of having an opportunity of joining in it. The ladies, not suffered to repose during a single quadrille, may well envy the most forlorn coteries of neglected damsels in England, condemned to patience and a bench without a chance of being invited to quit their seats, for the duties imposed upon them are of a very arduous nature, and to refuse to dance at all, according to the custom of male exquisites at home, too much in request, would give such deep offence, that few parents or guardians allow their fair charges to incur the odium.

The society at Dum Dum has not yet recovered from the paralyzing effect produced by the diminution of the *batta*. In the first alarm and terror, lest pay and allowances of every kind should sustain similar clipping and curtailings, many amusements and indulgencies were relinquished; and now that the panic has subsided, some from motives of economy, and others from the apprehension that too great a display of superfluous cash so near the seat of government, might sanction a farther reduction, have wholly withdrawn their support from the theatre and other public amusements of

the place. In former times, the dramatic performances at Dum Dum almost rivalled those of Chowringee. It was not unusual to find an actor of considerable merit, and one who had become thoroughly acquainted with stage-business on the boards of a minor theatre in London, amongst the recruits enlisted for the artillery; such experience is frequently more valuable than talent in the raw material, for amateurs require a good deal of drilling before they can be brought to attend to the minutiae of such great importance to the effect of a play. Dum Dum, in its best days, has boasted performers sufficiently attractive to bring an audience from Calcutta; but it has shared in the general depression of theatrical property; few stars illumine its declining glories, and the once-crowded parterre exhibits a beggarly account of empty benches. Occasionally an attempt is made to revive the good old times; but they have all failed, and were it not for the persevering efforts of a few stage-struck heroes, who are content to perform to thin houses, rather than not at all, lamps would no longer twinkle on the degenerate boards of the Dum Dum theatre. Its external appearance is not very prepossessing; but in that respect it is not much worse than its proud neighbour in Chow-

ringee, which boasts little outward architectural display, though the interior is both handsome and commodious.

While upon the subject of theatricals, in and near the Presidency, an exhibition more strange than amusing should not pass unnoticed ; the performance, or rather the attempted performance, of English plays by Hindoo youths : an undertaking which, as it may readily be supposed, was not crowned with much success. This inauspicious beginning, however, may lead to better things ; native aspirants for the honours of the sock and buskin may perceive the propriety of confining themselves to the representation of dramas to which their complexion would be appropriate ; and when the catalogue of European plays is exhausted, and the Aurungzebes and Tamerlanes have run themselves out of favour, authors may start up amidst the corps, and employ their pens in illustrating the public and domestic occurrences of their country, in tragedy, comedy, opera, and farce. Though the execution might not be first-rate, such productions could not fail to be extremely curious and interesting ; they would lead to a better acquaintance with the manners and customs of the people of Hindostan, and prevent such monstrous exhibitions as

are presented to this enlightened age, in dramas resembling those styled “ *The Cataracts of the Ganges,*” “ *The Lions of Mysore,*” &c.

A fair proportion of the beauty and fashion of Calcutta is sometimes to be seen at the grand reviews and field-days of the artillery at Dum Dum ; but these splendid military spectacles do not attract so large a concourse of gazers as might be expected. Anglo-Indians are not to be stimulated to exertion by any ordinary degree of excitement ; they speedily lose that passion for sight-seeing, which at home induces crowds of people to brave dust, fatigue, hunger, and lowering clouds ; they will not put themselves out of their way except upon very great occasions, and never voluntarily encounter a tenth-part of the risk dared by the fashionable world in England at archery-meetings, horticultural-breakfasts, races, and reviews, where perils by land or by water, upsets in crowded roads, deluges in open carriages, with the impossibility of getting any thing to eat at inns full to suffocation, present a catalogue of evils sufficient to detain every person possessed of common prudence at home. The settled state of the weather, in the cold season in India, must remove all apprehensions from those skyey influences, which have

such a fatal effect upon out-of-door amusements in England; but ships are launched, and military manœuvres practised, without attracting many spectators.

Dum Dum possesses a good station-library, which is amply furnished with new publications as they come out from England. There are few places in India where young officers have the advantage of so many opportunities of improving their minds, and of fitting themselves for their profession; its vicinity to Calcutta enables them to procure books and instruction upon scientific subjects difficult of attainment in more remote cantonments; enough of mental relaxation may be found in the society, which is large and cheerful, without being dissipated; and temptations to idleness are not so great as at Barrackpore, the grand thoroughfare to the Upper Provinces, and a place which no stranger landing at Calcutta omits to visit.

Dum Dum is much less frequented, the scenery possessing little attraction; there are, however, some mansions in the neighbourhood, belonging to rich natives, which are objects of great interest and curiosity to Europeans. One of these, inhabited by a rajah, is distinguished for its menagerie, the only one of the kind now existing in Bengal, that

at Barrackpore Park being dismantled. The collection has been greatly enriched by the donations of the present Governor-general, who presented the animals, which formerly inhabited the cages in the Park, to a gentleman less alarmed by the expense of their maintenance. The specimens of the wild tribes of Bengal exhibited in this zoological garden are superb; but the collection is, of course, deficient in the less known natives of the upper and hilly districts of India, the forest denizens of Nipal, which will not live in the hot season in the plains, and for which it would be so desirable to have a dépôt near the coast, whence they might be shipped at the end of the cold weather for England. Doubtless, some arrangement of this nature will take place in the course of a few years, and the visitors of European menageries will be delighted with the sight of animals which they have hitherto only known from the descriptions of travellers.

A garden-house, about four miles from Dum Dum, on the road to Calcutta, the occasional residence of Dwarknauth Tagore, a rich and highly intelligent native gentleman, possesses many attractions to Europeans, who gladly avail themselves of the hospitalities of the courteous owner. Dwarknauth Tagore converses fluently in English with

his guests, whom he receives entirely after the European fashion, permitting (although a Hindoo) fowls and butchers' meat, with the exception of beef, to appear at his well-covered table, at which he occupies a seat, challenging the company, the ladies especially, to take wine, but refraining from the more solid food which is placed before him. The house is a beautiful and commodious structure, furnished in the best taste, and strictly in accordance with our ideas of Asiatic luxury, though differing widely from the real state of things in native houses ; sofas, stools, and ottomans abound ; some of the rooms are hung with fine engravings, and others are decorated with the best specimens of original paintings which Calcutta can afford ; several excellent portraits, from the pencil of Mr. George Beechey, and some clever productions from other European artists who have bent their steps to India. The tables are covered with books of prints, and portfolios of the most splendid description ; in short, it is a most delightful retreat, the gardens and pleasure-grounds being laid out in a style correspondent with the interior. The entertainments given by Dwarknauth Tagore, at this charming mansion, are very frequent, and he delights in obliging his friends by lending it for the

wedding-abode of brides and bridegrooms, who, in India, are rarely so fortunate as to be enabled to follow the English fashion of making an excursion during the honey-moon, on account of the scarcity of hotels and country-houses at their disposal. Ishara, Barrackpore, Dum Dum, and Garden Reach, afford asylums for newly-married couples, who are blessed with accommodating friends ready to vacate and lend their houses for the occasion; but these lucky individuals bear no proportion to the numbers who, after the celebration of their nuptials in the cathedral, are compelled to retire quietly, and without the slightest *éclat*, to their own homes, and to fall in at once to the domestic routine, for which it is considered more advisable to have some preparation. No place in the neighbourhood of Calcutta can be better suited for the scene of bridal happiness than the delightful country-mansion of Dwarknauth Tagore. Here are charming gardens to walk in, secluded rides and drives for evening exercise, and books and pictures to supply subjects for conversation, when those sweet topics are exhausted which, only in the days of courtship, are believed to afford never-ending resources.

CHAPTER X.

MADRAS, SERINGAPATAM, AND BANGALORE.

THAT the native armies of Madras and Bombay are equal, in the field, in strength, vigour, and good conduct, to that of Bengal, there is no doubt: officers of the King's service, who, at different periods, have commanded in the three presidencies, have given the most honourable testimony to the merits of all. But the Bengal sepoy has the advantage of a finer person and a more military air; perhaps, however, it would be more correct to say, the sepoys of the Bengal army,—since the province which gives its name to the presidency does not furnish the soldiers, who are principally composed of high-caste men from the Upper Provinces, Rajpoots, Patans, and Moghuls of good family.

The lounging, dishevelled habits, produced by the climate, have assuredly a deteriorating effect upon the style and bearing of European officers in the Company's service. These gentlemen have certainly nothing of the Prussian school about

them ; none of the upright, ramrod stiffness, which disciplinarians consider so essential, and which in Europe usually distinguishes a soldier from his fellow-citizens. The Madrassesees, as they are called, pique themselves a little upon the carelessness of their dress, and, when off duty, assume a nonchalant manner, and a neglect of the etiquette of military costume, which savours somewhat of affectation, and affords some sanction to the assumption of superiority on the part of the Bengal officer. It is said that, at the Cape of Good Hope (a place much frequented by visitants in search of health from the three presidencies, all of whom are characterized by the general designation of Hindoo), the officer of the Madras army is known by the deranged or dilapidated state of his attire ; that it is not uncommon to see him lounging about in a jacket so much the worse for wear as not to possess its full complement of buttons. Women, who are very quick-sighted in such matters, perceive at a glance the least violation of military proprieties, and the lower classes especially are wont to express their opinion in no measured terms. A half-caste lady in Calcutta, considering herself aggrieved by an officer from the neighbouring presidency, after exhausting every abusive epithet which the language could afford, wound up

a striking peroration by calling him "a little Madras major:" the force of railing could no farther go. It is proper, however, to say that there are different opinions on the subject; by some it is averred that the Bengal troops, though finer and larger men than those of the coast army, are not so smart-looking under arms, and that they do not move, or handle their muskets, with the precision and soldier-like steadiness of the Madras native infantry. These conflicting testimonies serve to convince indifferent persons that there is no real superiority in either; the claims of the Bengal establishment rest principally upon the height and good looks of the natives of the Upper Provinces of Hindostan, who are usually tall, stout, handsome men. There will always be a little jealousy between the rival establishments; and as the Bengalees live in a style of splendour which their fellow-soldiers do not attempt, they assume a pre-eminence which is generally acceded to them.

Those who have been accustomed to the luxuries of the capital of British India, the trains of servants in waiting, and the princely accommodations of the houses, are apt to disparage the customs and modes of living at Madras; but the traveller surveys with delight the splendid architectural remains

and picturesque beauties of southern India. The panorama of Madras, lately exhibited in London, afforded to its numerous visitants a striking and faithful representation of the military array of the fort, the glittering palace-like public offices, and the minarets, churches, and pagodas, embosomed in trees, which line the surf-bound coast of this singular and truly oriental city. But the imposing air of grandeur and pomp, produced by the magnificent dimensions, architectural ornaments, and, above all, the marble brightness of the shell-mortar with which the government edifices are coated, is diminished, on a nearer approach, by the absence of the regular streets and squares, which give so much of a metropolitan air to the stately avenues of Calcutta. The roads, planted on either side with trees, the villas *chunamed* with the glittering material already mentioned, and nestling in gardens, where the richest flush of flowers is tempered by the grateful shade of umbrageous groves, leave nothing to be wished for that can delight the eye or enchant the imagination. Here are to be seen, in the most lavish abundance, the plume-like, broad-leaved plantain, the gracefully-drooping bamboo, the proud coronet of the coco, waving with every breeze, the fan-leaf of the still taller palm, the delicate areca, the obelisk-

like aloe, and the majestic banian, with its dropping branches, the giant arms outspreading from a columnar and strangely-convoluted trunk, and precipitating pliant fibrous strings, which plant themselves in the earth below, and add their support to the splendid canopy above them.

The climate of Madras is considered to be less sultry than that of Bengal; those stations which are situated on the highest ground of the tableland enjoy a very agreeable temperature. The large cantonment of Bangalore is 3,000 feet above the level of the sea, and the thermometer rarely rises above 80°; but the duties of the civil and military servants of the presidency often call them to less favoured places; and those who have suffered under the prostrating effects of a Mysore fever, have no reason to rejoice that their destinies did not lead them to Bengal.

In spite, however, of its pestilential climate, there are few places in the peninsula more attractive to a visitor than the scene of the splendid victory gained by the British arms in 1799. The island of Seringapatam, which is surrounded on every side by the Caverry, a wide and rapid river, to which the Carnatic owes its agricultural wealth, is a place of great beauty and fertility; but the reminiscences

connected with it are of a nature too overpowering to permit the mind to dwell upon minor circumstances.

The departure from every rule of honourable warfare in the cruel treatment of his British prisoners, together with many other acts of tyranny and oppression, have branded the name of Tippoo Saib with everlasting infamy ; yet, notwithstanding much that is wholly indefensible in his conduct, it may be doubted whether he deserves all the opprobrium which has been cast upon his character. A modern, and an unquestionable authority, assures us that Tippoo's government could not have been very oppressive, since his resources were almost inexhaustible, and the cities, towns, and villages of his dominions, with few and slight exceptions, were in a flourishing state. Notwithstanding the frequency of his wars, his accumulation of personal property was immense. He had, during a long series of years, maintained very large bodies of troops, and kept up his fortresses, and replenished his treasury. His subjects were rich, and his army well-appointed and faithful.

The fortunate person by whose hand the son of Hyder met his death, remains to this day unknown, nor has it ever been ascertained whether the jewels

which adorned his person became the spoil of friends or foes. When the corpse was discovered, it was found divested of all its ornaments. He was known to wear a ruby ring constantly upon his finger, which he esteemed to be the finest in his treasury, and the value of the string of pearls, or rosary, about his neck, was almost incalculable. The gems, of which it was composed, were the largest and richest India could produce; they had been the collection of many years, and were the pride of his dress. Whenever a pearl of extraordinary size and lustre was brought to him for sale, he became the purchaser, and strung it on this precious necklace, in the place of one of inferior value; and as he never appeared without this favourite ornament, there is no doubt of its having fallen into the hands of some lucky adventurer, who concealed the knowledge of so great a prize. His turban was also always adorned with a jewel of price, but that had disappeared: an amulet, powerless to save, alone was left upon an arm which had threatened the subversion of the British Government in India.

One cannot be surprised that the riches gained at the taking of Seringapatam should still be fresh in men's minds, and that notwithstanding the scarcity of "barbaric pearl and gold," India should to this

day be esteemed a sort of garden of Aladdin, where clustering rubies, the flashing diamond, and the changeful opal, court the passenger's acceptance. An enormous quantity of jewels found their way to Europe after the capture of Seringapatam. The houses of the chief sirdars, as well as those of the shroffs, were completely pillaged. The terrified inmates of the zenanas, anxious only to preserve their lives, came forth with all their treasures, and offered their jewels as a ransom. Fortunately, the palace was not made the scene of indiscriminate plunder; it was secured in time, and its immense riches were thus preserved for more equal distribution to the conquering army. The treasures contained in this palace consisted of jewels, gold and silver plate, rich stuffs, valuable MSS., and various other articles of great price and rarity. The quantity of money discovered, though great in itself, was not commensurate with the expectations raised by the report of Tippoo's vast resources. It is supposed that much remains still concealed, although the confidence of the besieged not being shaken until the fortress had fallen into the possession of the enemy, little or no precaution was taken to secure property of any description. India still affords a fertile field for the treasure-seeker. In

traversing the ruined portions of once-flourishing cities, destined by the fortunes of war to frequent changes of masters, it is impossible to avoid wishing for the divining rod, of which we read, to direct the search of the money-digger ; for doubtless immense riches still lie buried where the terrors of the Moghul and the Mahratta have prevailed.

The enormous mass of wealth accumulated by Tippoo Saib, though hoarded up without regard to ornamental arrangement, and without being made subservient to the embellishments of the palace, were registered with great care. The captors found every article labelled according to its entry in the corresponding catalogue. Very extensive buildings, including the greater part of the palace, were appropriated to the reception of the treasure ; a series of quadrangles, surrounded by store-houses having open galleries above, were appropriated to those articles which were least susceptible of injury. The jewels, carefully deposited in coffer, were kept in large dark chambers, behind one of the halls of audience. The plate, both gold and silver, was preserved in the same manner. The jewellery was set in gold in the form of bracelets, rings, necklaces, plumes, aigrettes, sword-belts, &c., and the workmanship was not inferior to the value

of the material. We have a record of one necklace, which seems to have been wrought by a hand not less cunning than that of the wondrous Florentine. It was composed, says Major Moor, of fifteen or twenty chains of gold, each link being a very small bunch of grapes, of most exquisite workmanship; the number of links or bunches of grapes must have amounted to many thousands, they were so minute. The chains were nearly five feet long, connected by a pair of splendid clasps of diamonds and rubies. The value placed upon it at Seringapatam, sixty pounds, fell infinitely short of its real worth, taking the workmanship into consideration. One of the galleries containing two *howdahs*, made of solid silver; and some of the plate was richly inlaid with gold, and set with jewels.

Tippoo, it is said, whose love of hoarding was insatiable, passed the greater part of his leisure hours in reviewing and examining the acquisitions of his successful ambition. His love of literature was not inferior to his love of wealth; he possessed a large and curious library, arranged after his own fashion, in a manner little according with European ideas. The books were kept in chests, each volume having a separate wrapper, so that they were for the most part in excellent preservation. These

books, it is supposed, must all have been collected by Tippoo himself since his father was too illiterate to have possessed any taste for reading.

The garden-houses and pavilions of Tippoo Saib are now frequently occupied by European officers, whom military duty or curiosity leads to Seringapatam, and who, of course, receive the most courteous attentions from the heads of the reigning family. A large mansion in the Dowlut Baugh, amongst other decorations, is ornamented with a painting representing the defeat of Colonel Baillie; in which the artist, more intent upon pleasing his patron than in giving a faithful delineation of the scene, has taken care not only to depict the conquering Hyder after the most triumphant fashion, but to exaggerate the disasters and distresses of the enemy. Nothing can be more wretched than the execution of this design; but the colours are bright and gaudy, and the whole as fresh as when it delighted the eyes of the invader and his less fortunate son, the British Government not choosing to deface or remove this trophy of bygone days. Few persons can now indulge in a sojourn in the Dowlut Baugh without experiencing some injurious attack of disease; the whole island retains its fatal power over European constitutions, and from time immemorial

it has only been the natives of the soil who could successfully resist the deleterious effects of the climate. We are told, that out of many thousand natives compulsorily brought by Hyder and his son from the Malabar coast, and forced to settle in the new territory, only five hundred survived at the end of ten years to relate the story of their tragic expulsion from their own homes; and five years sufficed to reduce the number of European officers and artificers, in the sultan's service, imported from the Isle of France, from five hundred to twenty-five. Notwithstanding its comparative salubrity, the cemetery of the neighbouring station, Bangalore, is but too well filled with the victims to the fevers so prevalent in southern India.

Bangalore is rendered peculiarly interesting to the English visitant, from its having been selected as a place of confinement for many of the prisoners taken in the wars of Hyder and his son with the British Government. A large wheel for drawing water is still in existence, in a garden adjoining the palace of Hyder Ally, in the native fort, about two miles from the present cantonments, at which that despot, who was ignorant of every rule of honourable warfare, compelled his captives to work. During the reign of Tippoo Saib, upwards of

twenty officers shared the same prison for a dreary interval of four years, the miseries of captivity being cruelly augmented by the continual expectation of death in its worst form. The little intelligence they could obtain of the state of affairs beyond their prison wall was conveyed to them by a native butcher, who frequently enclosed a letter in the head of a sheep, which, being severed from the body, he flung into the prison. Suspicion fell upon this faithful fellow, but he would confess nothing, notwithstanding the attempt made to intimidate him by tying him to the mouth of a loaded gun. Immediately upon his release, he proceeded to perform the duties of his avocation, and, undaunted by the recollection of previous peril, resorted to the old mode of communication, and beheading a sheep, whose teeth were tightly closed upon a letter, flung it with reckless daring amongst the assembled officers, who subsequently owed their lives to the determination which they evinced to resist the attempts made to intimidate them. Two of these prisoners still survive to tell the tale—the rest have gone to their graves: and it is melancholy to add, that several became the victims of indulgences by which they sought to indemnify themselves for the hardships and mortifications they had been made to undergo.

Bangalore, though not equalling in aspect the luxuriant, though deleterious beauty of the adjacent territories, is prettily situated in a moderately-wooded and well-watered country ; there are barracks for two King's regiments, one of cavalry and one of infantry ; and in addition, the garrison consists of three Native Infantry and one Cavalry regiments, with a proportionate number of battalions of artillery, the requisite staff, &c.

Bangalore has always been distinguished, throughout the Madras presidency, for its festivities. It possesses very handsome assembly-rooms, and a theatre, in which the amateur performances are often above par. These latter entertainments have been found so attractive, that persons, anxious to uphold the honour of the station, have been induced to make an authenticated report, by which it has been shewn that the number of representations of a popular piece, with reference to the bills of mortality in both places, has in the theatre at Bangalore equalled that of *Mother Goose* at Covent Garden. The fancy balls are upon a grand scale ; and the very beautiful little theatre being at the extreme end of the assembly-rooms, and therefore easily thrown open when necessary, the effect of the whole is magnificent. No expense is spared upon

these entertainments; the bands of the several regiments are in attendance, and a flourish of trumpets gives the glad summons to supper. When the society happens to be composed of choice spirits, amusements of this nature go off with great *éclat*. The superior size and loftiness of reception-rooms in India, render them much better adapted for large assemblages than those belonging to the same class of society in England; and even in the most sultry seasons, less inconvenience is sustained from the heat, the nights being always comparatively cool, and a free circulation of air secured by the multitude of open doors. The danger of failure is occasioned by the difficulty of getting the party to harmonize; dull, disagreeable people are to be found every where; and when these preponderate, the meeting, intended to be festive, must of course be "stale, flat, and unprofitable."

During the cold season, the European residents of Bangalore amuse themselves with pic-nic parties, there being numerous objects of curiosity in the vicinity to attract the visitant. There is nothing throughout Hindostan to equal the remains of southern India; the pagodas of Benares, and even those of Bindrabund and Muttra, are mean in comparison to the splendid temples which are spread

deeds were perpetrated. A wild jungly plain, a village with its mosque or pagoda in the distance, scattered groups occupying the foreground, some cooking, some smoking, others singing to the sound of a drum; baggage piled around, with bullocks stretched beside it, and here and there a few ponies picketed. A faint streak of red light bordering the distant horizon, and night falling like a cloud upon the murderers, their victims, and the open graves.

By an official document, dated in 1816, already alluded to, it appears that the state of the country was at that period such as to call the attention of the government to the dreadful scenes daily acted upon the open thoroughfares, and as they will be found to add considerably to our stock of information concerning bands of robbers of a very singular description, they are here subjoined.

“ In the part of India to which the present report relates,* there would appear to be five distinct classes of Thugs or Phansegars, who rob and murder on the high-way.

“ 1st class.—The high-roads leading through Etawah, Allyghur, and Furruckabad, are for the most part the scenes of the atrocities committed by these

* The Upper Provinces of Hindostan.

gangs. In 1811 a list of sixty-eight persons, called *Junadars*, composing a band, was given into this office by confederates, who were induced to deliver themselves up to Colonel Gardiner, under the hope of pardon. They were all Moosulmauns, and chiefly of the Kewattee tribe. By the confessions made by these people, they appear to have carried on their malpractices in small parties, assuming various disguises, resorting to the *serais*, and accompanying travellers under suspicious pretences, to have watched their opportunity for the destruction of their victims in retired places, commonly by strangulation: the knife being used to perfect the work, and the bodies being usually thrown into wells or *nullahs*. Deleterious drugs are said to be used only by novices in the business, the more experienced Thugs trusting rather to the certain effects of the knife or the cord, than to the doubtful operation of poison. These murders are most frequent in the hot winds, at which season travellers are induced to start from their halting places before daylight to avoid the heat.

“ 2d class.—This class consists exclusively of Hindoos, and chiefly of the Soehd tribe; they are stated to pass themselves on travellers as Brahmins and Kaits, and are reported to be much more nu-

merous than the first class. The scene of their depredations has been for the most part in the confines of Etawah, and the western *thannahs* of the Cawnpore district, and they are stated to be ostensibly engaged in cultivating small patches of ground, though in fact supported by the more lucrative profession of Thuggy.

“3d class.—This class was formerly settled in the pergunnas of Sindana and Pürkham, from whence they were expelled, and have since taken up their residence in Mahratta villages on the confines of our territories, where the aumils of the native government are said to derive a revenue from their depredations. From the examinations given in the appendix, it would appear that these Thugs are Moosulmauns and Hindoos of various tribes. The murders committed by these gangs appear to be perpetrated more openly than those accomplished by the first two classes, whole parties being destroyed together, and the bodies of their victims being frequently found unburied on the plains. The depredations of these desperadoes are said to have formerly extended over different parts of the Dooab, but latterly to have been devoted to the country near Gwalior, and to the district of Bun-

delkund, in which it does not appear that the crime of murder by Thugs was known prior to 1812; but in consequence of the dispersion of the Sindanee Thugs, no fewer than nineteen instances of the offence were ascertained in 1813, in which year thirty-five bodies were found with marks of the knife or cord. Very considerable gangs of these people are said to be at present collected in the Mahratta states. Mr. Wauchope, on the 21st instant, writes: ‘ But a few weeks have elapsed since a party of forty-two persons, men, women, and children, were every one strangled by a large body of Thugs. The travellers were coming from Jubbelpore towards Purnah, and the murders took place about the frontier between the Nagpore and Purnah country. Four of the miscreants were seized by an officer of the Purnah chief.’ It would appear from examination in this office, that the punishment of this offence, in some of the Mahratta states, is by enclosing the criminal alive in a pillar of masonry. The first magistrate of Etawah writes, that a gang of Thugs, seized not long since by the chieftain, Meer Khan, were subjected to amputation of each hand, and to loss of their noses.

“ 4th class.—Several instances of murder on the

It is certainly entertaining to a stranger to watch the effect of music upon the serpent tribe. Very well authenticated accounts are upon record of their being charmed from their hiding-places by the sound of a pipe or flageolet; and those which have been tamed are constantly exhibited dancing to the melody produced by this simple instrument. They stand erect upon their tails, and move about, bending their heads, and undulating their bodies in accordance with the measure. The *cobra capella* is the dancing-snake of the East, and the production of the snake-stone is exclusively confined to cealed stone; but stoutly maintained that he fairly caught the first; and that, although the semi-transparent, amber-like stones were altogether fictitious, the opaque concretion was sometimes, though not often, found in the reptile's head; and that it really had some of the virtues ascribed to it. He good-humouredly blamed me for exposing him—hinting that credulity was the easy parent of craft; and somewhat slyly said something Hudibrastically equivalent to the assertion that

—— the pleasure is as great
In being cheated, as to cheat.”

Major Moor bought many of these stones, and although, as they multiplied on his hands, he began to suspect that “he was not one of the wisest men in the world;” he still cannot entirely shake off the belief that these stones are actually taken out of the reptile's head, and have some anti-poisonous virtue.

this species. There is not, it is said, much difficulty in extracting the poison of a serpent, which is contained in a very small reservoir, running along the palate of the mouth, and passing out at each fang: the natives are supposed to be very dexterous in forcing their captives to eject this venom, and are then enabled to handle them without the least danger. Some persons, however, well acquainted with the habits of snake-charmers, deny that they extract the poison, and attribute the impunity with which they handle these dangerous reptiles to their accurate knowledge of the temper and disposition of the animal, and their ready method of soothing down irritation. The natives boast the possession of various antidotes to the bite of a snake, and often pretend to have imbibed the venom and effected a cure. There is a plant which goes by the name of *chandraca*, in which considerable confidence is placed; and arsenic, which enters very largely into the composition of the celebrated Tanjore pill, is often employed as a counteracting power. Volatile alkalis are most generally tried by European practitioners, and very often prove successful; but the different degrees of strength in the venom of snakes render it doubtful whether in the worst cases they would have any

beneficial effect. Some medical men aver, that the bite of a *cobra capella* in full vigour, and in possession of all its poisonous qualities, is as speedily fatal as a pistol-ball ; and that it is only when this poison is weakened by expenditure, that medicine can be of any avail.

THE END.

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